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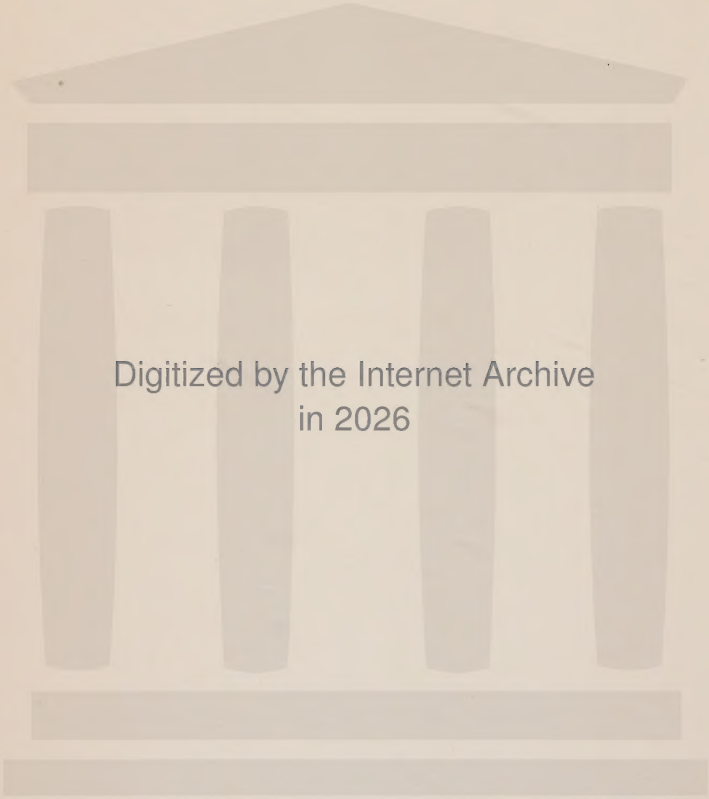
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LIFE AND LETTERS OF JAMES MACGREGOR

JAMES MACGREGOR. AGE 18

LIFE AND LETTERS

OF THE REVEREND

JAMES MAC GREGOR

D.D.

MINISTER OF
ST. CUTHBERTS PARISH, EDINBURGH
ONE OF HIS MAJESTY'S CHAPLAINS

BY

THE LADY FRANCES BALFOUR

AUTHOR OF
'LADY VICTORIA CAMPBELL: A MEMOIR'

ILLUSTRATED

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TO

HIS BRETHREN

THE MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

WHO HAVE KEPT

THE FAITH

ONCE DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS

PREFACE

THE first words which are written here must record the gracious permission of His Majesty King George to publish the letters written by Queen Victoria to Dr. Mac Gregor.

This Memoir would have been incomplete without these tokens of esteem from the Sovereign to one who regarded her person and Throne with such reverent devotion and friendship. H.R.H. Princess Henry of Battenberg has allowed me to publish a letter from Dr. Mac Gregor.

To H.R.H. Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll, I owe not only many letters, but much valuable advice and information. My brother, the Duke of Argyll, has written a Reminiscence of his companion in that journey through 'the Great Lone Land,' which remained one of the happiest of life's journeys in the memory of his 'Chaplain.'

The other members of my family have helped me by records written and oral. They all shared with me in the great possession of a close intimacy with this friend of our youth and age.

For encouragement and criticism in the initial stages, I owe much to Professor Saintsbury and the Rev. Norman Maclean. For illumination in the Gaelic, I had the assistance of the Rev. Donald Macpherson, Tiree. From Iona, 'the cradle of Scottish Christianity,' Mr. Ritchie has given the design taken from the graven stones of Remembrance. They are the symbols of the faith that inspired the life and work of James Mac Gregor.

The Very Rev. Dr. James Robertson of Whittinghame

has given me much contemporary information, and moderating counsel. The Rev. Dr. Fleming, as one of Dr. Mac Gregor's friends, and his Trustee, has given much time to the supervision of all that has been written. From many others I have had the cheering words to 'go forward,' the helpful remembrance that recalled the man we knew, words that have stimulated and inspired me in my work.

What merit this Memoir possesses is due to my dear friend and colleague in this labour of love. Mrs. Mac Gregor has prepared the immense mass of material which Dr. Mac Gregor left, and her assistance in every way has been invaluable. She has given to it a patience which has never wearied, a memory never at fault, a knowledge of the past and the present, and a high ideal of what this Memorial should contain. That I have in some measure satisfied her hopes makes me believe that I have not altogether failed. To succeed completely is beyond what is possible. To those who knew the vital, impulsive, loving presence, words of description will seem but 'a dead letter.' To those who did not know him, no words can bring to life a personality as unique as it was arresting.

To know Hamish Mac Gregor was to love him. To be his friend was to possess his faithful remembrance. To love him, was to enter some little way into that Presence from whence he drew the faith that was never ashamed, the love which endured, the dominant hopefulness of a heart consecrated to the service of God and humanity. He was the living epistle of his creed in this world, and he had the vision of the eternal life that lies behind 'the blue hills of time.'

F. B.

WHITTINGHAME, *Oct.* 1912.

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CHAPTER I

BIRTH, YOUTH, AND ORDINATION

1832-1855

'Land of my Sires! what mortal hand
Can e'er untie the filial band
That knits me to thy rugged strand.'

JAMES MAC GREGOR was born on 11th July 1832. He was the eldest son, and his twin sister the eldest daughter, of a family of seven children. Of his parents he has written in his Family Register:

'My father, James Mac Gregor, was the eldest son of Malcolm Mac Gregor and Grizel Menzies, and was baptized in Dull, 5th March 1788. He was a man of prayer.

'My mother, Margaret, daughter of Dougall MacDougall and Margaret Walker in West Tullich, Artalnaig, Parish of Kenmore, was baptized on the 12th April 1801.

'She was the most perfectly gentle, unselfish, Christ-like soul I have ever known. No one ever heard a harsh or unkind word from her lips. During the last two years of her life which were spent with me, though often in pain, no one ever heard her murmur or saw even a passing frown upon her face.'

'I wish,' he wrote in after years, 'that I lived constantly as near God as do my dear old father and mother.'

James was born in the farmhouse of Brownhill, near Scone, his father being tenant of the Earl of Mansfield's farm there. Shortly after his birth his parents removed to Spoutwells house, as the house at Brownhill was going to be pulled down.

Very pleasant was the situation of his birthplace, and it

ever remained in his memory as a goodly heritage. He was to see many lands, and to go on many a pilgrimage east and west, but to the last he maintained that there was no land so beautiful as Scotland, no county so fair as Perthshire, and no British river to dispute the pre-eminence of the Tay. Whenever he reached one point in the landscape it was his wont to repeat the lines from the *Fair Maid of Perth*:

> '"Behold the Tiber," the vain Roman cried,
> Viewing the ample Tay from Baiglie's side.
> But where's the Scot that would the vaunt repay
> And hail the puny Tiber for the Tay?'

There is a story that on Dr. Mac Gregor's first visit to Balmoral, Queen Victoria asked him where he was born. 'In the most beautiful portion of your Majesty's dominions,' was the characteristic answer. 'And where may that be?' inquired the Queen. 'In Perthshire, please your Majesty.' The Queen is said to have replied that she quite agreed with him. That was as well, for Dr. Mac Gregor would have withstood any sovereign to the face who had contradicted him on such a tenet of patriotic faith.

But, in truth, the lot had fallen unto him in a fair ground. In front of the house at Spoutwells lies the historic village of Scone, amid its orchard gardens. Beyond are the spires of Perth, and in the distance rise the Ochil Hills and the ranges of the Sidlaws. To the right lie the wooded valley of the Tay, and the barrier gates of the distant Grampians. Far back, as far as memory went, in spring, summer, autumn, and winter, that scene was to him a source of never-failing delight. In autumn he loved the vast and level sea of mist which filled the valley of the Tay, and made the Grampians seem as the further shore of that still grey ocean. Even as a child, he used to gaze on the scene till his eyes filled with tears. Nature inspired his early days, and when he revelled in her beauties in many a far country, he knew he had first learnt her mysteries among the hills of Perthshire and the woodlands of Scone.

Writing to Miss Robertson from his old home, he says:

'SPOUTWELLS, SCONE, *June* 1, 1863.

'I am writing you from my dear old home with all its happy memories and tender associations. There is to me a melancholy feeling in looking back on the far past and calling up days which will come back no more. It is just as long as I can remember, the time when we came here. Every tree and hedgerow, the green lawn in front, the large garden, the splendid view of the Sidlaw and of the Grampian hills, all as familiar to me as the features of a beloved face. I'll match Spoutwells for beauty against almost any spot in Perthshire. The mind gets educated by constantly looking on the beauties of splendid scenery. There are few things for which I am more thankful than the love and reverence I feel for the external works of God, the trees, the flowers, the rivers, and above all the everlasting hills.

'I was born among its beauties; and grew up among them listening to the prattle of the green trees, and studying the shadows and the lights on the far off Highland hills. So you see nature and I understand each other; and many a pleasant chat I have here had with her.'

He thanked God that his eyes had opened on hills and woods, and that he had never lived in a house from which he could not see trees. He always affirmed he would die in a week if he lived in a street with houses opposite. Neither was the situation 'barren.' The well which was by his father's house gave its name, not in vain, to a gushing spring of the coldest water. In many a fevered and wakeful hour he was wont to repeat, 'Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well at the home of my childhood.' When he revisited Spoutwells, near the close of his life, the grass-grown and neglected well-head was the greatest change that his fond remembrance noticed—'It was not his well.'

In the farmhouse he, the eldest of the family, and his six brothers and sisters were brought up. There are few left, either of the family or of those who were their neighbours, to tell the story of their youth. He would himself recount that there was a vacancy in the parish church of Scone, and he was carried into Perth for the rite of baptism. A

family party seem to have gone into the town with the infant. It was the year of the Reform Bill and of demonstrations for and against that Act. The Mac Gregor family belonged to the Tory party, and as they passed a public house, they found that the band of the Reformers had left their big drum outside, while they were regaling themselves within. A hole was kicked in the drum by Donald, the uncle of the baby, and having done this deed of prowess, the whole party quickened their steps, for fear of the retribution they might encounter at the hands of the enraged bandsmen.

'It may have had something to do with my political convictions,' Dr. Mac Gregor used to say when defending the Tory instincts of the natural man.

He was born with physical disabilities which must have taken the whole of his energy and wonderful vitality to overcome. He was stunted in his growth by malformation in his legs, which skilful treatment might have remedied. It was not available, and he had to win through, and seldom spoke of what it had cost him. A legend lingers of his mother being at pains to send him regularly to school. The usual truthful neighbour asked her what was the use of educating one with such natural disadvantages. She, with the maternal vision, answered shortly and to the point, 'Jamie has pairts.' 'Aye fechtin'' was also a legend which lingered among the ancient sayings of the village. He was chiefly educated at Scone Parish School. Two years at Perth Academy completed his school career. Dr. Mac Gregor always spoke in warm praise of the old system of parochial teaching in Scotland, and of his blind teacher Mr. Davidson. At a meeting to uphold that institution, held under the presidency of the late Duke of Buccleuch, he paid a warm tribute of praise to Mr. William Keay, under whom he had studied as a boy in the parish school of his native village.

In the simple country life his body gained strength, and he was allowed to make the most of his conditions. It was probably in early boyhood on the farm that he learnt to

stick on a horse. 'Riding, like swimming, is acquired by one effort, by one act, and is never forgotten. Like curling, I might say, if you have curled once, swum once, ridden once, you'll be able to do it ever after,' he optimistically wrote in urging his future wife to go where she could acquire this necessary accomplishment.

Among the farm beasts he seems to have learnt his first lessons in that quick and vivid sympathy which was his ever-ready response to sorrow or gladness. In the year of the cattle plague a murrain struck the farm, and the cows lay dead in the byre. Mrs. Mac Gregor's fortitude gave way, probably more with the sense of a coming rent day than the actual want of food. Jamie's consolation took a practical form. If she would not cry, he would be content to take his porridge with water.

That the story concerning this son of consolation has survived shows that his help was not offered in vain. When bad times came upon them the landlord kept the farm in his own hands and let them stay on in Spoutwells, his father acting as manager. He used to say in later years, that if his mother had been the farmer she would have made it pay, as she was more careful of money than his father.

Looking back, in happier years, he speaks of 'his sorrowful youth, a heart long-seared and very sorrowful,' but possibly the opening of a life full of new and undreamt-of possibilities made the past, with its uncertainties and fears, seem darker by contrast. Healing came with the new affection which was at a much later date to renew all the springs of his warm heart, and it is not necessary to think of his school life as being more chequered than his infirmities warranted.

The Secretary of the Clan Gregor Society, Edinburgh, writes:

'In going through the old minute book of the Clan Gregor Society some time ago I found that the Society on May 19th, 1847, awarded £3 to be given in the meantime to James Mac Gregor, Spoutwells, Scone, near Perth, son of James Mac Gregor, Foreman on the Farm of Spoutwells, fourteen years of age, who was highly recommended by

Dr. Crombie, minister of Scone, as being exceedingly earnest and diligent in the prosecution of his studies, amiable in his temper, and in his conduct uniformly well-behaved, and at present studying in a private school in Perth. He has made great progress in Latin and Greek, having read the Eclogues and three books of Virgil, the first book of Livy, and is commencing Horace. In Greek he has been reading selections from Dunbar's *Minora Collectanea*. His teacher, Mr. James Davidson, Private Classical Academy, Perth, also gave his favourable testimony to the zeal and assiduity evinced by the youth.'

The money granted for his education was restored by this member of the Clan Gregor, and he always took a grateful interest in the proceedings of the society. He helped to resist a proposal to hand the funds of the society over to educational trustees.

Neither at school nor at the University of St. Andrews, which he entered in 1847 at the age of fifteen, does he seem to have been marked out as a youth of any specially outstanding gifts. In the eight years which he passed at the University he studied, when he gave himself to work, with energy and that absorbed interest which he always took in what really interested him. The Rev. Dr. Menzies Fergusson, writing from Logie Manse, has kindly contributed some notes of these early days.

'Dr. Mac Gregor was a fellow student of my father, the Rev. Samuel Fergusson, minister of Fortingall. I have heard many incidents related of these far-off, happy days. Among them was one in connection with some students' social gathering. James Mac Gregor had been present, though my father had not been, and returning home late in the evening, he climbed up a lamp-post adjoining my father's bunk, or lodgings, and tapping at the window, called out, "Oh Sam! have you any cheese?"

'He seems to have been a happy-hearted, genial soul, and a great favourite with his fellow students. Of course the chief characteristic of St. Andrews student life was the strong feeling of comradeship engendered, which was never lost in after years. My father was in love with a young lady, who afterwards became his wife, and who resided on

the other side of the river Tay from Scone. James Mac Gregor came across one summer day to see my father, and in the course of the day the young folks of the Farm were amusing themselves in the sitting-room. "Little Mac Gregor," as he was sometimes called by his intimate friends, asked them if they would like to hear how he would preach when he became a minister. He procured the big family Bible, placed it upon the table, and began to deliver a most effective discourse, thumping the Book from time to time, and revealing many of those gifts which distinguished him in after years. As he concluded he remarked, "That 's how I am to preach." He possessed a large amount of Celtic fire, which was to stand him in good stead in the future, and was extremely loyal to his friends. On one occasion my father told him of some disparaging remark a certain person had made about him (Fergusson). Mac Gregor said, "If he says that again, I 'll knock him down."'

His linguistic gifts made his classical studies both easy and interesting to him. The certificates of all his professors have been preserved. They universally speak of Mr. Mac Gregor as fulfilling all the requirements of the curriculum, which was not very exacting.

Professor Mitchell remained his friend throughout his life. He was also much attached to Professor Ferrier, and said that any student would have laid down his life for him.

Among the students James Mac Gregor was every one's friend. His breezy vitality, and readiness for all sorts of enterprises, made him popular, but neither teachers nor students foresaw, or had any reason to predict, his brilliant career. Writing of this period of his life, after he had returned to Fife as a parish minister and was constantly in touch with his ancient college, he muses on that period of his life at some length.

'*March* 17, 1863.

'On Monday I baptized the child of Professor Mitchell, named James. I esteemed it no small honour that he should pass by both his own ministers, and give the duty to your humble servant.

'Along with him I walked over the old scenes dear to me as a quondam disciple of St. Andrews, walked over the links, looked into the old College, and saw the splendid alterations, similar to those of the Abbey, going on in the College church, the very church of whose student benches I was once the censor, and had my name cut deep in every book-board and in every seat. All was gone, the dear old nooks where some of the reprobates used to play cards during the service, and still more painful! the seats and desks all carved thick with students' names, the laborious operation of many a tedious sermon hour. All gone! And the students who sat in them! Dear old friends! Where are they now? Many of them long ago mouldered in the kirkyard dust; many of them beyond the sea; all scattered far and wide; and I can reckon on the fingers of one of my hands all of my old classmates with whom I am now in the least degree familiar.

'You young girls have no such experiences. You too see friend after friend depart; but they never were to you what old college friends are to one another. Only the love which man has to woman surpasses that. The love which woman has to woman does not at all match it.

'And then I looked through St. Mary's, and also at the room where in the dead of night another student and I skulked through the window and made our way, with the help of the Doctor's Mary, to the darkened room where the Doctor (Haldane, our good Principal) lay in his coffin. I shall never forget the moment when, the trembling servant holding a small farthing candle in her hand, one of us lifted the lid of the coffin and we looked at the corpse of our good old Professor.

'My flesh grues and creeps as I recall the picture in the horrible quietness of this my room in Lindifferon, the clock ticking out its mournful moments.

'One of the duties I did in St. Andrews was to call on my old landladies with whom I stayed as a student. Twelve years had elapsed since I was with them; but the moment I set foot in the house; oh! the warm shake of the hand; and the kind expressions and the beaming look assured me I had still a place in the hearts of the good old bodies.

'The place is very much changed since I was there; but I confess to you I looked with somewhat strange feelings on the old Castle, remembering the hole we used to go into, the

The Farmhouse of Spoutwells

walls we used to clamber over; and the very lamp-posts and knockers had a charm, remembering how in the dead of night we used to ease the one of their tops, and render the other vocal with sound. There was mischief but no crime in all that.

'What interested me above all other things was the new College Hall, established on the principle of the Oxford and Cambridge Colleges, with a warden and sub-warden. It is established in Sir Lyon Playfair's house and Sir David Brewster's at the east end of South Street, and has a thorough scholastic look about it. The warden, Mr. Rhodes, a very handsome young Englishman, showed me through the establishment. Two sons of the Duke of Argyll and other scions of the nobility were in it.'

From early years James had decided to enter the ministry. His father had been destined for the same calling, but he had to give up the idea on the death of his father, as, being the eldest son, it fell to his lot to take up the working of the farm in Fortingall, where his mother had been left a widow with young children. There was only one doubt which seems to have pressed on James's mind. 'Seeing myself such a poor little figure, I took to learning Gaelic, to fit myself for the only charge I thought from my personal appearance I could expect to be called to, namely, that of a Highland parish.' A Gaelic sermon on Eccles. xii. 1 still exists with the note: 'Preached by me before the Gaelic Society in the Town Church of St. Andrews.'

The gathering cry of his clan was not to be first heard among the corries and glens of the remote Highlands. Those who know some of the districts where he thought he might be called to labour can imagine what effect that fiery oratory would have had on the western Celt. Almost he might have persuaded them to believe that works are the evidence of faith; but his ministry was destined to be first heard in the loud stunning tide of human life, and not by the restless waters of the west.

If he ever had any doubts or misgivings, his choice once made, no trace of them remains. He left St. Andrews to be licensed by the Presbytery of Perth in 1855, and in that

year commenced the habit of keeping a diary, which grew to ampler proportions as the years passed by him.

The record of the four months after leaving college and becoming licensed is as brief as it is startling. Two posts as assistant, an offer of Milngavie, and then the call to him as a youth of twenty-three to be ordained to the charge of a church in a parish which numbered fourteen thousand inhabitants.

'He was little more than a beardless boy when he dispensed his first Communion,' but he knew long years after that he had not spoken in vain. When he was in Auckland, New Zealand, in 1889, a lady came to him after his service and said, 'I was brought to God at your first Communion, and have lived near Him ever since.' 'Thank you,' was the answer. 'It was worth coming all the way to Auckland to hear that.' Well might he feel the responsibility laid upon him. Most characteristic of his faith and purpose in his great call to be a minister of the gospel was the text on which he chose to preach to this so great a people gathered under his charge. The diary tells his story in the fewest words:

'*March* 5, 1855.—Arrived in Dundee from Scone and commenced work in Scouringburn as Missionary of St. David's congregation, under the Rev. Robert S. Horne, at the salary of £70.

'*May* 18.—Licensed by the Presbytery of Perth to preach the everlasting Gospel of Christ—Mr. Liston, Moderator.

'May God give me grace and strength to do my duty aright and enable me in eternity to give a good account of the performance of the trust reposed in me in time.

'*May* 20.—Preached my first sermon in Forgandenny Church, on the text "One thing is needful." Same sermon in the West Church, Perth, in the evening.

'*May* 27.—Preached for Mr. Horne in St. David's, Dundee. Forenoon, on Ahab; Afternoon, on the "One thing needful." Attended Sabbath School, Scouringburn, in the evening. Visited, read and prayed with Miss Ross, just dying. Very tired.

'*June* 4.—Finished working as Missionary in Dundee.'

From Dundee he proceeded to work as assistant to his early friend, Mr. Burns, then minister of Newton-on-Ayr. Writing to Mac Gregor, he expresses all the pleasure he feels in the prospect of his arrival.

'THE MANSE, NEWTON-ON-AYR,
'*May* 15, 1855.

'It gladdened my heart to get your note saying that you were to come to Newton. Your advent will change this place entirely to me. It will make new things old. We shall not have the walks in "the bonny woods," nor the excursions to the highland lochs, and the St. Martin's streams, nor the explorations of the trackless forest of the Muirward, and the slaughter of vultures and deer; nor these holy strolls by the "double ditches" with pipe in mouth, and philosophy in soul: but we shall have walks to the amphitheatre, and smokes by the study fire. We shall have labour in the pulpit, and in the town. We shall sit at the drawing-room windows and look upon the glorious sunsets behind Arran, and talk of the days when we used to go to the top of the old Scone brae, and look away to the Logie Almond hills, bathed in the splendour of the same sun—Jamie, my heart warms at the thought of having you here. I look for your coming as for the coming of a brother. It takes me back to the happiest days I shall ever spend, and makes me almost hope that these days shall come again. When are you to be licensed? Remember you promised me your first sermon.'

The journal records his 'hearty warm reception' and the commencement of his duties at Newton-on-Ayr. On 21st June he was on board the steamer for Glasgow. 'The Clyde scenery such as one may look for in a happier world. The natural here far surpasses the moral.' He was to know that broad water of the west, through cloud and sunshine, better in the years before him, and in the meantime he notes the result of his visitation of the people.

'*June* 26, 1855.—Commenced visiting at Prestwick-toll. Found the people poor and destitute both as to their bodies and as to their souls.

'*June* 30.—Engaged committing.

'*July* 1.—Preached three times, and taught in Sunday schools.

'*July* 2.—Read whole of first volume of Sydney Smith's Life. What a wonderful life!

'*July* 8.—Committing sermon and disturbed by long and loud hurrahs proceeding from not one but many voices. What a proof of the general irreligion of this place!

'*July* 28.—Preached at the request of the committee as a candidate for the High Church, Paisley.

'Had a letter asking me to preach as a candidate for Milngavie.

'*Aug.* 2.—Met the Rev. Mr. Walker of Ochiltree at the Manse—had the joy of a walk and talk with one whom I consider the most astounding scholar, and the most advanced Christian I ever met.

'*Sept.* 2.—Preached in High Church, Paisley, as first on leet of candidates.

'*Sept.* 18.—Still in bed, and there received telegraph message informing me that I was elected last night minister of the High Church, Paisley. Votes for me, 227; for Mr. Henderson, 41; for Mr. Ritchie, 26.

'*Sept.* 19.—Had a letter giving particulars of election and saying that I was unanimously recommended to Town Council for presentation.

'*Sept.* 20.—Had letter from Town Clerk of Paisley announcing that a presentation had been issued in my favour to the High Church, Paisley, by the Town Council, and asking me to forward certificate of licence, etc. etc.

'*Sept.* 22.—Qualified as Presentee by taking oath of allegiance.

'*Oct.* 3.—Became Licentiate of Paisley Presbytery. Presentation laid on table with letter of acceptance, sustained by Presbytery and Certificate of Licence of having qualified to Government, etc.

'*Oct.* 14.—High Church. Preached forenoon and afternoon to immense audiences. High Church at 12 o'clock. Preached before Presbytery.

'*Nov.* 8.—Was solemnly ordained by the Presbytery of Paisley to be minister of the High Church. The Lord grant in mercy that I prove a useful workman in His vineyard! a devoted and humble and successful minister of the Cross of Christ.

'Dined with Presbytery and chief people of Paisley, 70 present.

'*Nov.* 11.—My first sermon in Paisley, as minister of the High Church. Text—"Make Thy way straight before my face. . . . Uphold me with Thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee."

'*Nov.* 25.—My first Communion with my people in High Church.'

CHAPTER II

PAISLEY

1855-1859

'Make Thy way straight before my face.'

THE High Church, Paisley, had been without a minister, and the patrons had a reputation below which they did not desire to fall. The Kirk was chiefly notable from its exalted position, and for a saying which connected it with the Disruption controversy. Its minister 'came out,' and in the true spirit of certain Disruption worthies, he had exulted with savage delight in the fact that he had left the church committed to his charge as a habitation for the owls and bats. Like many another false prophet, his name would long ago have perished, were it not connected with this saying.

If any doleful creatures had taken up their abode in the High Kirk, or any of the churches in Paisley, in less than ten years they were all to be put to flight. The three young ministers who were in charge of the three principal churches did not let the grass grow in the deserted courts of the Church of Scotland. When Mac Gregor was joined by Cameron Lees and Alison, the Church of Scotland had no need to hide her head. They were all close and intimate friends, and their earnest ministry was destined to draw many within the borders of the Church who had erstwhile left it. It was not the Church of Scotland in Paisley in the 'fifties which was left destitute and empty.

The Paisley people prided themselves that they had early discerned the merits of many of the leading ministers of the

day, and the question arises how they had heard of the licentiate of but four months' standing.

Paisley, when it got its candle, did not hide it under a bushel. The town councillors were too glad to narrate the tale of how they brought the young minister to the charge for which they were responsible. His brilliant success covered them with reflected glory. Several candidates had been heard for the vacant charge, but the town knew themselves as good sermon-tasters and were 'no' that easy to please.' Time was passing and a Sunday appeared in sight for which no preacher had been secured.

Two of the elders decided to go to Ayr and there interview Mr. Burns, afterwards the well-known Dr. Burns of Glasgow Cathedral. The popularity of the minister of Ayr was assured, and the deputation pressed him to preach as a candidate before the congregation of the High Church. Mr. Burns was willing to accept a call, but he would not preach as a candidate. The elders had no commission to give him a call, and the interview was nearly at an end, when Mr. Burns said, as an afterthought, 'If you won't take me, take my assistant, and you 'll get a better man.'

The vacant Sunday pressed on the mind of the deputation, and in desperation they closed with the offer. They had not seen the assistant, but they were probably struck by Mr. Burns's very unusual laudation of his subordinate's qualifications, and they felt that his merits must, indeed, be outstanding.

There are one or two stories connected with Mr. Mac Gregor's candidature which bear the impress of truth. They serve to illustrate the unhesitating courage and self-confidence which marked all such crises in his life.

Mr. Matthew Scott was the leading man in the Old High, and he took a great interest in the advent of the candidate. They were afterwards to be on terms of intimate friendship. As soon as he knew that Mr. Mac Gregor had consented to preach he offered him hospitality, and also gave him the advantage of that truth in love which has tested so many friendships. Mr. Scott, after hearing his first services, asked

him this question: 'A little fellow like you would not think of the High Church?' 'Try me,' was Mac Gregor's answer.

On the second occasion, after preaching as a candidate, the two friends were walking in the garden, enjoying a quiet smoke after the exertions of the day. The elder turned and asked a yet more direct question of the preacher. His accent had the true Paisley ring, and the question was a searching one: 'Noo, Mr. Mac Gregor, if you were minister of the High Kirk, do you think you could come forward every Sabbath and give us twa discourses like the twa you gave us to-day?' There was no hesitation in the answer. With the glint in his steel-blue eyes, and all the roused energies of his expressive countenance, young Mac Gregor gave back the answer: 'If I didn't think I could do far better, I wouldn't be here to-day.'

On the 18th September Mr. Scott wrote to him of his election, and as he gave the figures cast for the three candidates, he added, 'The result I anticipated from hearing your first sermon, but I scarcely expected such a majority. It is nearly unanimous. The meeting was large and respectable, and not a disagreeable word. After the mind of the meeting was ascertained by a vote, you were unanimously recommended to the Council as a fit person to fill the vacancy.'

Mr. Mac Gregor had preached before the congregation in July, and again in August, as one of three candidates, but from the first the choice of the people was never in doubt. His minister, the Rev. Dr. Crombie, wrote to him from Scone:

'I was waiting anxiously for the Post-woman this morning when your note of yesterday brought me the glad tidings of your success. I thank the Lord for His goodness to you; and I hope and trust that He who has called you thus early into His vineyard will give you health, and strength and skill for the prosecution of your important labours. I have just been to congratulate your mother on this kind dispensation of the Divine Providence. Her feeling on the occasion is of a mixed character; joyful, no doubt, but mingled with anxiety because you are so young.

'In the course of my visiting to-day, I met several of your

quondam acquaintances here: some of them had heard of your success, and others not, all were earnest in expressing their delight and satisfaction.

'By the Report of the Commission of Religious Instruction, dated 1837, the stipend of the High Church was then, and I presume is now, three hundred pounds, "paid by the Burgh, and secured by bond."'

'SIR,—You are elected Pastor of the High Church this evening. Yours respectfully, HENRY BORLAND'—ran the official intimation.

When their minister came to stay, he justified the choice of his people, and fulfilled his own high-hearted undertakings.

The congregation had never wholly repaired the breaches made by the Disruption, but now they filled the church in ever-increasing numbers. Large as was the sitting accommodation of the barnlike structure, it was taxed to its utmost limits.

Organisation was conspicuous by its absence, and Mac Gregor set himself to the task of getting his great parish and congregation into order. Before his advent there had been a dreary confusion, and the records of the church were neglected. The communion roll was taken from its resting-place, and the records of the kirk-session meetings were methodically kept. In the first year of his ministry he writes on Communion Sunday, that there were five tables with 416 communicants, 52 of them admitted for the first time. His charge and fencing of the tables that day lie among his many other written words. They are as finished in style, and as comprehensive in doctrine and command, as were the discourses of his latter years; they have the same insistence on and vivid presentment of the doctrine of sin and the Atonement; the same vital devotion to the cause of the Lord and Master of life; and the same vision that life is short, and that the keys of death and Hades are with the One who was dead and is alive for evermore. No words were spoken in the pulpit at this time but were written out, more than once. As soon as he was licensed, the ominous

word 'committing' appears in his diaries. His sermons were long at the first writing, and grew longer with revision. Composing and writing, and finally committing, were all done at a white heat of intensity. The ribald shouts at Scouringburn, which made him hotly condemn the godless city, pursued him all his life. He hated interruptions, and ministers and women have this in common, they can never call their time their own. In Paisley he sought for refuge and quiet in the steeple of the High Kirk. There, with the silent dead below him, he meditated and wrote, often far into the night. The Campbells of Blythswood also put a room at his disposal, where he could go into retreat for the work which required undisturbed preparation.

The steeples of the High Kirk and the Abbey had many legendary 'Songs of the Bell' around them in these days. During the time of one minister the Abbey bell was heard to say, 'Dull sermons, dull sermons,' and Mac Gregor was asked, 'D' ye ken what the bell o' the High Kirk says?' The minister had heard nothing. 'It says, "We 're a' gaun to Heeven. We 're a' gaun to Heeven."' He saw no objection to the saying of his bell, and said it was a good word. 'Ay,' retorted the informant, 'but dae ye ken what the bell o' the Abbey Kirk says?' 'No, what does it say?' 'I doot it—I doot it—I doot it.'

He was considered a long preacher even for the hardy days of the Victorian age. His sermons usually greatly exceeded the sands of the hour-glass, and speaking too long and too loud was a sin with which he often charged himself.

The listeners were rarely wearied, the style was so living and fresh. Whatever he had seen or heard during the week was introduced, sometimes with an audacity which could only have been carried through by a great orator, and a fervent believer in the truth of what he stated.

He was accused of searching for original texts, and he certainly chose such as were arresting. One of his earliest sermons was from 'Grey hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth it not.' Another on 'How readest thou?' When he occupied for the first time a new pulpit which had

been specially built for him, he referred to the event by preaching on 'Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood which they had made for the purpose.' With unconscious irony, in a parish where the minister was meditating leaving, he preached on the text, 'Occupy till I come.' 'Man, you might have waited a little,' was the comment of his brother minister. 'Ephraim is a cake not turned,' was the arresting foreword of another, which he frequently preached.

The unwritten liturgies of the Church of Scotland have always had their place, quite as much as any of those enclosed in the Order of Church Service, whether Catholic or Anglican. In many of their forms they were lifeless; neither did the minister really lead in prayer, nor did the congregations deem that they were to do more than listen, seated in their pews, with a mind critically bent on him who was presenting the incense of prayer and praise. The young minister had a vital belief in the power and need of prayer, and he had no hesitation in making the necessities of the day and hour subjects of immediate intercession, whether in or out of church. Among his earliest manuscripts are the well-known lines by Adelaide Proctor on 'Secret Prayer,' and his note-books abound in the forms of liturgies, whether gathered from those of ancient usage in the Christian Church or of contemporary writers on prayer. Two forms entered in a book commencing with notes of lectures heard at the University, and ending with notes for sermons made in his maturer years, contain his earnest belief in intercessory prayer.

'Make us steadfast in the faith which will lead us to trust in Thee our Heavenly Father, as our all-sufficient friend. We are Thy creatures, Thy hands have made and fashioned us, grant us understanding that we may live, for without Thee we are helpless to all good and hopeless to all comfort. May Thy blessed religion bring us to Thee as to a Father and a Friend whose love is unbounded, as fathomless as Thine awful, Thy glorious existence. Make every village a Bethlehem, every house a temple, and every heart an altar consecrated to Thy worship.'

Through all his ministry he followed what was the immediate instinct of his mind, to make all his wants and thoughts the subject of prayer. It had its drawbacks, for it sometimes brought the immediate present too vividly into the thoughts of those with whom he was worshipping. Soon after he had come to the High Church, he perceived among his congregation a newly appointed superintendent of police. The sight of him recalled the existence of that force of which he was the overseer, and the new officer found the police and their position in the city duly commended to the guidance of God. The superintendent became a member of the congregation. There were others who did not care for this public recognition, but it was as natural to him as it was for him to speak his heart out to the friends in his daily life. In later years, when the art of obstruction in the House of Commons was being perfected as an instrument to stultify debate, the presence of members of that House in his congregation made his prayer for the guidance of Parliament take the form of a petition, that it might be preserved from making itself the laughing-stock of the world. A somewhat trying reminder to those who had sat through nights of wasteful obstruction of the possibilities held by the situation.

There are no doubt pitfalls connected with the absence of a set liturgy, and if his vehement and unguarded enthusiasms and affections occasionally broke down formal restraints, none will ever forget the fervid faith and the words, glowing from a heart hot within him, with which, in all times of tribulation, in the hour of death, and in the joys and hopes of eternal life, he approached the mercy-seat. Intercessory prayer was with him a living necessity, and that saving faith was borne in on those whose wants and cares he made known in the great congregations. Through him they learnt to pray, believing that their petitions would be heard and answered.

At a dinner given in his honour soon after he became the minister of the High Church, he spoke of the reception given him.

'When I first set foot in Paisley some three short months ago, I suppose there was but one single face in it I had ever seen, a face I once saw in the pulpit of the Town Church of St. Andrews, the face of the Rev. Mr. Wilson. And little did I think while listening to his powerful sermon on behalf of an Association dear to the soul of every man who can call St. Andrews his Alma Mater, the St. Andrews Students' Missionary Society, little did I ever think that in God's great mercy I should be privileged to be a fellow-worker with him in the same city, and that city Paisley. Little did I think when I first came here, without one single man or woman whom I could claim as a friend, that I should stand here this evening and around me hundreds whom I can not only call friends but brethren and sisters, bound to me and to each other by a tie as God-made as that which binds the father to the son. You have chosen me for your pastor. Time alone can tell if that choice has been a good one, but allow me to convey to you this assurance that, with the help of that God who has sent me here, no time, no effort, no prayer shall be awanting on my part that of that choice you may ever have reason to repent.'

At no time in Mr. Mac Gregor's life were friends slow to gather round him. He wore his heart on his sleeve, and it must indeed have been a churl in spirit who would not take the sunny affection which he distributed so generously to his people and his friends.

Everything he wrote had a touch of the autobiographical. He always shared his thoughts with those around him. A remarkable address given to the Young Men's Christian Association in his first year at Paisley has been preserved. It is too long to give at length, though it is as polished and literary in its form as everything he wrote. 'My youth and inexperience,' he says in it, 'were it nothing else, forbid my assuming the grave character of the Lecturer; and even were this obstacle removed, the multitude and the pressing nature of the duties which, in a town like this, devolve upon a minister and clamorously demand every moment of his time, would prevent me giving a lecture.' Continuing, he wishes 'to avoid the appearance of being very didactic or very dictatorial. To avoid the Lecture on the one hand, or

the Homily on the other, and to appear among you in a character which I think I have a right to claim, just as one of yourselves, embarked on the same holy cause, engrossed with thoughts of the same high enterprise, and actuated by the same feelings and hopes, and loves and fears.' In describing the use of meeting together in Christian fellowship, he says:

'The holiest and the happiest hours of a long and happy college life were the hours I spent in the Students' Missionary Association, a Society with an object very much akin to your own—the inciting and fostering a spirit of piety among the students. Never shall I forget the thrilling sense of delight that oftentimes pervaded my frame; the heavenly calm and quiet that filled my whole soul, when as the grey evening twilight with its pensive and religious melancholy descended upon the old walls, and hovered among the old trees of St. Mary's, the fervent prayer was breathed from the lips of a fellow-student, or our simple song of praise ascended up to heaven. Amid all the kindly memories, amid all the hallowed associations connected with my Alma Mater, there is none so gladdening to me as these. How could I forget those hours when the atmosphere of a better world was floating about me, when the din of the busy earth was hushed and the sounds of strife were still, and when the echo of our psalms seemed music from the better land. These hours were a foretaste of the joys of eternity. That joy was produced by the feeling of deep sympathy with those around me, as we were engaged together in the solemn services of devotion. It nerves the soul to holy purposes and lofty deeds to know that there are kindly hearts beating in unison with ours, sharing in our loves and hopes and fears. That sympathy which the soul of man is ever seeking is drawn out and quickened by such societies as yours.'

He continues with an echo of the days in which he was writing, as he speaks of the Life of Captain Hedley Vicars,

'whose affecting history I doubt not has been read by all of you, and sent you where it sent me, to my knees. He had difficulties to battle with in the great work which he assigned himself—difficulties such as you will never

require to surmount, and yet he overcame them all. And the soul of many a fellow-countryman whose bones are bleaching on that far-away Crimean shore has been, through his teaching and example and prayers, blessed as they ever will be by the Power Supreme, borne straight from the battlefield to that better land, where the sound of war's loud trumpet, the crash of the conflict, and the groans of the dying shall be heard no more for ever.'

He found himself in a maelstrom of work, not rendered easier by his inexperience, nor lighter by the amount he took out of himself in the performance of the varied duties which lay to his hand.

The abolition of patronage, and the Education Act, have considerably lightened the labours of parochial ministers. The inspection of the schools in his parish was a heavy tax on time and strength, and an early list shows that eighteen had to be visited and examined. His correspondence in these seven years teems with letters from his brethren soliciting his good offices with patrons and congregations; and requests to preach in old and new places rained in upon him. One friend, in urging him to return and preach in Dundee, says: 'Your popularity here will draw an immense sum, which will go far to discharge the unpaid bills of the minister of Wallacetown!'

One of his brethren writes to him: 'You caused such a wonderful sensation among my people that I have to take all my time getting up sermons, so that I may not require to give up my title to be second best. I am getting on bravely and manfully. My lungs are so very strong that I fear the roof will be blown off the church some day soon.'

Another writes:

'As to my direction or advice on the Intrusion matter, I beg to say that I have quite enough to do at home, and will not appear in any sense as an agitator of the question, out of our Presbytery. Indeed, I would rather fight with those animals for which old Ephesus was famous than I would with certain and sundry of my brethren on this question. All I say is, that unless some-

thing is devised and done *beyond* Aberdeen's Act to cure the evil, the "Kirk" as an Establishment is not worth twenty-five years' purchase. I am safe, but *you* are not, and if you are driven to the wolds of voluntaryism after my death, pray preach a sermon standing on my grave and tell it there that I said so.

'May the Lord bless you and keep you, for a choice fellow art thou.'

'*May* 2, 1859.

'REV. AND DEAR SIR,—I know that you have ever shewn yourself ready to promote the interests, not only of those who were your college-fellows, but also of others, provided they are deserving. I am sorry indeed that there was so little intimacy between us in our college days, because you were considerably in advance of me, but a remark of yours I shall never forget. I mind meeting you once opposite the Town Clock of St. Andrews with a bundle of Missionary tracts in your hand. It was a cold, windy day and you were muffled up and looking very anxious. I asked you how you felt in view of getting license soon. You said, "I feel very uncomfortable and shaky already." Off you set, and so did I.

'I was licensed last June and got the place I am in now by popular election. I would ask your influence to get me on the leet for ——. L. got on through your recommendation.'

Such letters as these confirm the opinion expressed by one of the Victorian ministers of the Crown, that the best defence of competitive examinations for the services in the State lay in the fact that 'Patronage administered by the ministers of the Crown would render their lives even more arduous than they are under existing conditions.'

In such a correspondence as he preserved, it is impossible not to see that if patronage had its benefits, it had also defects, quite as great as those under popular election. The minister of the High Kirk was to know more about the question of 'Non-Intrusion' in his next charge. Among the letters asking him to preach and lecture one is preserved asking him to give his church for the use of a distinguished foreigner.

Rev. James MacGregor. Age 25

'REV. SIR,—It will no doubt be known to you that the celebrated Mr. L. Kossuth, ex-governor of Hungary, will soon visit Glasgow and Paisley, with the view of giving political lectures in each place.

'He is a great and good man in poverty and exile. Those who esteem his work and feel sympathy for his condition are disposed to manifest their feelings by a public demonstration in his behalf; and by inviting him to lecture, expect to derive information from his elucidations, and to gather a little money for his support. Under these circumstances it is very desirable to have a large place of meeting. The church you possess is considered the best place for a full display of interest in the town of Paisley.'

What answer was returned is uncertain. Probably the promise to warn the congregation to remove their books, and the assurance that the committee will endeavour to keep order as an essential duty, and proper care taken to give no offence, did not obtain for the writer the use of the High Church.

There are some notes in the crowded diary of 1856 which leave even more to the imagination than the request for the exile of Hungary to occupy Mac Gregor's pulpit: '*Oct.* 23. Married an Irish couple, Robert Bryan and Bridget Toy, in evening. Married the wrong woman. B. T. turned up next day.' A year later he preaches in Perth prison: 'Saw all the prisoners, recognised Irish couple,' may refer to a previous acquaintance. Fortunately such harassing events do not often occur, but the orderly routine was heavy enough and the pace was beginning to tell. Another old friend writes a warning word:

'MY DEAR MAC,—People who are in earnest find it no easy matter to take things easy, but the most earnest minister ought to remember that the care of his health is as much a duty of religion as the care of his flock. I regret that you have been neglecting your health, but rejoice that you are going to the Continent.'

Mr. Mac Gregor was as nomadic in his instincts as any member of the clan to which he belonged. He loved to wander far and wide, and that he had not done so even

earlier in life was due to the conditions in which he found himself. As soon as he had a purse long enough and time he might call his own, with health never of the strongest, he turned his eager vision across the seas and desired to see those things which he had made his own through art and literature.

In January of 1857 he paid his first visit to the Continent. Nothing escaped his glance or his comments. Fellow-travellers shared his confidences, and were soon his dearest friends. In Paris he saw everything, dined at a café and 'paid the enormous sum of 20 frs.' Sailed from Marseilles to Naples, 'sea pretty heavy, many sick. A poor priest—a Jesuit too—dreadfully ghostlike.' His fresh impressions he wrote to Mrs. Barclay, his most intimate friend and parishioner. He went as far as Vienna, 'saw Germans in furs, and found the houses insufferably hot.' He returned by Antwerp and Ostend. In London he notes one decided opinion, 'St. Paul's Exterior more telling than St. Peter's. Interior, Pooh!'

'ON BOARD THE "AMALFI" BOUND FOR LEGHORN,
'*Jan.* 29.

'MY DEAR MRS. BARCLAY,—I promised to write you from Rome; but that I found to be impossible, as every moment was spent about the streets or in bed. I now do the next thing to it. We have just left Civita Vecchia, the seaport of Rome, and if I can possibly manage it I shall endeavour to give you a short though imperfect account of our travels since I last wrote you. If this letter is illegible blame the pitching of the vessel, which will not allow the plates to keep their equilibrium on the table before me. You may be sure that the first thing uppermost in my mind at this moment is that particular section of the community of Paisley embraced within the High Parish. I erred exceedingly before leaving in not having fixed on some particular place to which letters might be addressed to me; the consequence of which is that I must remain in ignorance (perhaps in this instance it is blissful ignorance) of everything that is going on. If there are any grumblings it is as well that I do not hear them; if there are any good news, the best, and to me the most grati-

fying to hear, would be to hear that you are all well, and this I believe. From the kindly interest you have ever taken in me I flatter myself that your thoughts have sometimes turned towards me, though perhaps in some such shape as this—"I wonder if our poor misguided minister is experiencing anything like the pleasure he pictured to himself by his absence." To such inquiring thoughts I distinctly answer, that not only the pleasure I have enjoyed, but the real benefit I have reaped by my short Italian tour have far surpassed my most sanguine anticipations. I have been living in an entirely new world, a world filled with the wondrous creations of art. No one can possibly look upon the paintings and the statuary with which Rome is filled without being materially and lastingly benefited. . . . To do the sights of Rome anything like justice would require at the very least a month, and we have been able to devote to them something less than a week, and yet by regularly marking out our course for the day, before leaving in the morning, we flatter ourselves that nothing of real importance has escaped a passing visit. There is as much danger perhaps in seeing too much as in seeing too little. It is impossible for the mind to retain anything like a distinct recollection of the innumerable impressions that flit through it in the course of a day of sight-seeing; and it should therefore be the object of the visitor, as we have endeavoured to make it ours, to devote our time only to those things whose impression is likely to remain.

'I have kept no notes or jottings of anything. There has positively been no time even for that. At night one feels so dreadfully tired that the first thing thought of is rest and sleep. But this I have no doubt will eventually prove no great loss. In the course of time what was not worth recollecting will have passed away; all that is truly valuable should remain. This letter will be the only record, and I am afraid a worthless one, of what I have hitherto seen and felt. In my last hurried epistle, sent as this one will be, without being pre-paid, because I have learned that unpaid letters are always surer of reaching their destination, I stated that we had arrived safely in Naples after a short and, upon the whole, pleasant trip of about three days from Marseilles.

'I had heard and read a great deal about Naples, but all came infinitely short of the reality. When we got out of our cribs and on deck on the Sabbath morning, immediately

before us we saw the gay and glittering city rising out of the Bay by a rapid ascent and crowned with the heights and the Castle of San Elmo, and a few miles to the right the mysterious mountain Vesuvius throwing up into the blue sky an enormous column of smoke, or rather steam. It can be compared to nothing in all the world save to an enormous conical funnel 4000 feet high sending forth the steam from some mighty engine driving the earth and keeping it in motion. During all the time we were in Naples the dense column of clear white steam kept rolling out without intermission. My meditations were cut short by the babel of tongues that were incessantly chattering from the mouths of some score of boatmen who had come to take us on shore. After landing and getting our passports and luggage inspected we were driven, by the most rascally looking coachman I ever saw, to the most comfortable Hotel de Genève, which my friend had patronised when in Italy some years ago. I could scarcely believe that the day was actually the Holy Sabbath and that you, at home, were quietly preparing for the services of the Sanctuary. The streets were crowded with booths and people, the shops all open, the sellers all shouting. It looked like a fair. It was the same throughout the whole day. After breakfast we went to the British Legation, where there is Divine Service every Sunday after the Episcopal form. We had to pay 8 Carlini—about 3s. 4d.—for the poorest sermon I ever heard. The day was most beautiful, the air as mild and balmy as in the latter end of May at home, though the sides of Vesuvius were streaked with snow. We were just newly out of the close cabins of a steamboat and in a world to me entirely new. Would you blame us then, though Presbyterian clergymen, for sauntering quietly along the Chiaja on to Puteoli, where Paul landed when he was brought a prisoner to Rome? I had another object in view. I wished to see a Neapolitan Sabbath, and it was certainly the busiest day I saw while in Naples. Along the whole course of the Chiaja, the gayest street in Naples, running along the sea-beach for about a mile and a half, there was nothing to be seen but carriages of all sorts and sizes, sometimes five of them abreast, from the coach-and-four down to the cart and mule, all madly driving along. The whole of Naples seemed to have turned out for a day's amusement. I have never seen Hyde Park, but I am pretty certain that in the gayest

London season it can present no gayer scene than passed before our eyes. The road winds along the bay. Chiselled out of the soft rock on which Naples is built, it passes in some places right over the tops of the houses, and in looking down upon the little bights or bays which the sea has scooped out of the land, we could see immediately beneath our feet the sweetest villas, light and airy like the people that inhabit them, with the waves of that beautiful sea singing around them, gardens green with the orange trees and glistening with the ripe and golden fruitage. Every few yards brought us to some fresh scene of loveliness. Here a fountain playing in the sunshine, there a little cave or grotto cut out of the rock to shelter the pleasure-hunting Neapolitan from the intense heat of their summer. It was almost impossible to believe that we were in the very middle of winter, and that but a few days before we had been in a land of frost and cold. The whole place seemed a very garden of God.

'Returning in time for dinner, we met at the *table d'hôte* a large company gathered apparently from every land under the sun; some were speaking French, some German, some Italian, and a very few were chattering in Cockney English. Of all men you can possibly meet with on the Continent the most uncivil and unbearable is your thorough Englishman. They are far worse than Americans. Fortunately we met with very few of them in Naples. They had taken fright and made themselves scarce, as reports were going that in the event of another outbreak of the populace they would be attacked in their hotels, and that as friendly relations had ceased between Britain and Naples, and, of course, there being no British ambassador to protect them in the event of anything happening, they could expect no restitution. There was an English frigate in the bay all the time we were there, which helped to make matters more secure.

'I was talking of dinner. It may give you a very good idea of how the Sabbath is kept to tell you that after dinner, when coffee was brought in and cigars, along with them were the bills of the different theatres with the various plays and actors for that night. The gentlemen attentively perused them, and fixed upon the theatres which were to be honoured that Sabbath evening by their presence. Upon my representing to a puppy of an Englishman, beautifully starched and dressed, at the opposite side of the table, as if he had just walked out of some barber's shop where he

had been doing duty in the window: "What a wretched Sabbath service that must be which is closed up by an evening in the theatre!" I got for answer: "Owh! A—ah! it—is—the cu—u—stom of the—pla—ace, I do no—ot see anything *vewy* ba—ad in it,—fo—my pa—at, I am going myself." The fool! I wonder if Mr. Scott thinks that it is interfering with the liberty of the subject to keep these places shut in England on the Sabbath. My painted English friend might like to have a nice quiet theatre to go to in the evening of the Sabbath at home as well as in Naples, where he might quietly chew the cud of the sermon he heard in the forenoon. Is it not a pity to deprive him of this inestimable privilege? Is it not a shame to deprive a free-born Englishman of his inalienable right to spend the Sunday as seems to him best?

'On Monday morning we started by train to Pompeii—the buried city of the past—and it certainly did sound a little strange to hear the railway officials shouting out as the train arrived, "Pompeii!" "Pompeii!"—as strange, one has well remarked, as it would be to hear a railway guard shouting, "Jerusalem!" "Jericho!" It would take pages and more time than I have at my disposal to give you anything like an adequate conception of my feelings as I found myself walking through the streets of the disentombed city. They are as perfect, and many of the houses, with the exception of the roofs, as complete as they were eighteen hundred years ago when inhabited by the Romans. I expected to see a few bare walls with heaps of rubbish around them. You may picture my astonishment when I found myself within a large but silent town, its only inhabitants a few Neapolitan soldiers. I should say that many miles of streets and houses have been laid open, every particle of rubbish cleared away from them, and yet about one-fifth of the town only has been as yet disentombed. The paintings on the walls of the houses are in many instances as fresh as if they had been painted yesterday. The ruts of the wheels are as plain on the streets of Pompeii as in the streets of Paisley; the very marks of the wine and oil measures are distinct upon the counters of the wine-shops. We saw a baker's shop and oven of the very same shape as our own, and we could hardly help believing that it was but a month ago since the fires were put out. The temples and the market-places, the halls of justice with their beautiful

columns, the fountains in the houses and the little gardens which every Roman had *within* his house, even though he had no more room for it than a few feet, the beautiful mosaic on the floors of the wealthy abodes, their household utensils —all are as perfect as if its inhabitants had lived but yesterday. We were very much struck with two marks which our soldier-guide showed us in the moist wall of an enormous wine-cellar which was attached to one of the largest houses. They were the marks of a woman holding a child in her arms. Their skeletons were found in an upright position when the cellar was explored. The poor lady of the house had in all probability fled with the infant, the dearest of all her possessions, to this subterranean vault when the fearful tempest of lava began to rain down, and had there with her little one found a grave. The wealthy husband had endeavoured to escape by the street with his gold. The skeleton of a man with a large bag of gold was found on the doorsteps. It is strange to think that when almost all the monuments of the domestic life of the ancient Romans have passed away, this city should again make its appearance and tell its mysterious tale. It is strange, too, that the very messengers of death that swept the inhabitants of Pompeii away should themselves have been the means of preserving their history and their city. Had it not been so suddenly, so awfully, and so completely buried out of sight, it would have infallibly shared the fate of its neighbours, and have ages ago completely disappeared. It would be necessary for you to see Pompeii to understand how it was destroyed.

'Herculaneum was completely overwhelmed—filled with the burning stream of red hot lava which in a few days would harden into the impenetrable rock. Had Pompeii been destroyed in the same way not a house of it, perhaps, would have ever been disentombed. But lying away from the sea about a mile and a half, and considerably further from the peak of Vesuvius than Herculaneum, before the stream of lava came its length it became congealed, and the city seems to have been buried by enormous showers of ashes and of fine dust, which filled up every crevice and made the whole a compact mass. From its size it must have contained about 50,000 inhabitants. The amphitheatre, which is singularly perfect, is seated for 22,000. Hiring two guides and two ponies at the gate of Pompeii, we began the ascent of the burning mountain. The day

was very favourable: the smoke rolling away seawards left the surrounding country clear. In a mile or two our course was through beautiful gardens and vineyards, the soil very fertile and pitch-black, being the lava worn down by the action of the atmosphere. Then we came into a region of perfect barrenness—a desert of black soft sand, in which the feet of our ponies sunk at every step; higher still into little hillocks of scoria or burnt matter thrown out at different intervals by the mountain. You have seen the half fused iron at large iron works. Fancy little hills of that stuff, or rather long ridges of it where a stream of molten matter had come tearing down the mountain and become suddenly petrified or congealed. We would never have been able to manage it on foot; but the poor, lean, little, hardy ponies were evidently used to the work, and knew that they had a certain length to climb with two wretches on their back, and that there was no use grumbling about it, but that the sooner they reached their journey's end the better. Our plan of procedure was this: Mr. M^{c}Corkindale, being mounted on the leanest and most docile of the two animals, led the way, with his guide holding on by his pony's tail. Then came myself and pony, both of us rather refractory and obstinate at times, the pony in this instance particularly so. Holding by the tail of my pony was the second guide. Each of them was armed with a good switch. When the ponies were in good moving mood they not only pulled us up but the guides too; but when, as was often the case, the poor things were like to give in, the guides each applied their shoulders to help them on, as you have seen a man trying to help a cart and horse up a stiff brae. This would do for a little; then there would be a sudden stop, then an application of the switch and the shoulder together, accompanied with the most terrific shouting and yelling, which the Neapolitans can manage better than any people on the face of the earth. This would bring us a few yards higher up,—and then another halt. At length my pony, which had long given symptoms of a strong desire to go *down* the hill rather than *up*, came to a fair standstill. Not one inch would it budge. The guide thrashed it until I pitied the poor brute, but it would not go. It tried the kicking. I stuck fast. It then tried to get both me and itself over a hill of lava, but the guide held on by the bridle. The kicking seemed to do it good, for having been tied by the bridle

on to the first pony so that it could not see the terrible climb before it, it pulled away for the rest of the ascent quite briskly. We came at length to the spot where all help from the ponies must be discarded, and we must manage to get up the best way we could. A dreary spot it was, the wildest and most fearful, with the exception of the burning crater, I have ever looked upon. During the previous ascent both Mr. M^{c}Corkindale and myself had been somewhat uneasy at seeing considerably before us some three or four men, who seemed to have no earthly business to do, so far as there were no travellers but ourselves discernible. We were something more than astonished to find four rascally-looking fellows seated at the spot where we had to dismount, and who seemed to be on friendly terms with our guides. Their purpose soon became evident. They had come all the way from Pompeii to help us up when our ponies would be no longer serviceable, and they now came forward with most profuse offers, which we politely but firmly declined. It was rather an ugly-looking business, to say the least of it, for you know that the Lazzaroni have not the very best character in the world. However, you know that Scotsmen are never deficient in courage, even where that can be (as in our case) of not the slightest use to them. We gave them to understand that they might climb up to the summit if they liked, but not a single penny would they get from us.

'The ponies being left to their own meditations we set out for the terrible climb. Immediately above us was the crater, and there we must get. It was hard work for a little. Every footstep we were over the ankle in the soft friable dust of the lava, and for a little it was almost true that for every step forward we took two backward. The rascals were watching their opportunity. Every now and then a fellow would come behind and give us a push up to show how pleasant it was; and certainly so it was, but we knew it would be likewise unpleasantly dear. At last I noticed that in pretending to guide us in the best way, they were actually taking us into the very worst. I immediately struck out into a path for myself, and found the rest of the ascent comparatively easy. On reaching the top, after our long ride, we were both of us perfectly fresh. There is no use trying to describe the indescribable. A few yards beneath us the smoke was rising out of the immense crater,

but in columns so dense that we could see no distance down into it. At intervals of a few minutes, loud reports were heard as of a hundred cannons firing a salute, and the clashing of the stones as they fell back again into the crater. I tried to look over at one part, but the guide pulled me back as it was dangerous. The smell of sulphur was in some places intolerable. It was a scene of terrific grandeur never to be forgotten till one's dying day. And the terror was by no means diminished by the thought that there were we two, alone on that most lonely and most fearful of all mountain-tops, with six most villainous-looking fellows beside us, whom it would not cost a thought to tumble us down into a bed of fire. And yet I felt no fear save what arose from the terribleness of the scene before me. We stayed about half an hour on the summit. The men who had come with us got no return for their toil, save what they managed to overcharge for some bread and wine and eggs they had brought with them. One of them scratched a hole in the side of the crater with his staff, put four eggs into it, and in little more time than would be required by the boiler in the kitchen of Canal Bank, they were nicely cooked, and in far less time were pleasantly devoured. We likewise purchased a bottle of the cheap wine of the country, and divided it among the guides. The progress down the hill was very pleasant, and very speedy.

'I have mentioned it more than once as a miracle even of modern travelling that we had finished our dinner after visiting Pompeii, Vesuvius, Herculaneum, within one week to the very hour of leaving Paisley in Scotland. The hand of the clock in the room where we were dining pointed to five minutes to eight, on Monday the 19th January, just as the last portion of the last apple had disappeared from my plate; and at that very moment, a week before, the train moved away from Paisley. Thus in little more than five days (for we were in Naples early on Sunday morning) we had travelled over a distance of nearly 2000 miles.

'We left Naples for Rome on Wednesday, and after some romantic adventures arrived there early in the morning of Friday. We employed our time so well in the eternal city that we were five or six times in St. Peter's, the most beautiful architectural work in the world. We spent nearly a whole day in the magnificent picture galleries of the Vatican; were twice in the Coliseum, the most splendid of

all Roman ruins; twice in the Capitol; spent some hours in the garden of the Pincio; visited the churches of St. John Lateran, where the Pope is invested with his dignities; Sta. Maria Maggiore, and a host of others,—the Pantheon, the Forum, the Baths of Caracalla, the Catacombs of St. Sebastian, fearful subterranean passages of unknown extent, where the early Christians buried their dead, and in times of persecution were wont to assemble for the worship of God; saw some of the most wonderful of all Roman relics, —the very table on which our Saviour partook of the last supper, the stone that formed the mouth of Jacob's well, the stone pillars from Pilate's house, a pillar from the Temple of Jerusalem that had been rent in twain by the earthquake—a beautiful job the earthquake made of it—and four stone pillars the exact height of the Saviour when He was thirty years of age. We saw likewise the Sancta Scala or Holy Stairs, being the identical steps which the Saviour descended after being condemned in the Judgment Hall of Pilate. None but penitents are allowed to ascend these stairs, and that only upon their knees. When we were there, there were some twelve toiling up, muttering their aves and kissing the steps as they ascended.

'JAMES MAC GREGOR.

'*P.S.*—This letter was begun on board the steamer going to Leghorn, but the pitching got so terrible, and the sickness so general, that I was obliged to desist. The greater part of it has been written in our most comfortable bedroom in the Hotel of Porta Rossa, Florence, after a tiring day's sight-seeing, but a most useful one. It is now, between ourselves, a few minutes into Sunday morning. My friend is soundly sleeping in his bed beside me, and so I daresay are all with you. Mr. Falconer will be running over his sermons before retiring to rest, and I am writing this post-script before retiring to mine. On Monday morning at six we start by the diligence for Bologna, eighty miles distant, and on Tuesday or Wednesday we shall be in Venice. The weather is much colder here than at Naples, but by no means unpleasantly cold. We crossed the Apennines, which are covered with snow. After spending a day or two at Venice, we shall make what haste we can to get home, by Vienna and Berlin; and, unless the Elbe is frozen over, I shall have, God willing, the pleasure of seeing you all

early in the week ending Saturday the 21st February. Make my respects to Mr. Scott, and say that if I can find time I shall write him from Venice. If I do not, he must mark it down not to the want of will but to the want of time. Good-night, and may God bless you all.

'J. MAC G.'

In 1858 Mac Gregor was again wandering, this time through Ireland and Wales. St. George's Channel was rough, 'which I much enjoyed,' and he soon chronicles making friends with the very worthy parish priest of Kilkee on board. He then proceeded to visit Blarney Castle, and kissed the genuine Blarney Stone: 'A feat of considerable difficulty. It forms the base stone of an abutment of the tower. Between it and the wall of the castle there is an empty space large enough to let through a man's body.'

At Bangor he went to the Cathedral and heard what he describes as a most miserable sermon on 'The Pharisee and the Publican.' Then Snowdon was ascended.

'Began the ascent, five miles. Had some most magnificent views as we neared the top. Spent the night on the summit at Philip Williams'. The wind howled, and the rain pelted the whole night. A most dreary and uncomfortable day. A dense fog concealed everything. Heavy rain. Wrote letters and examined the tourists' book. Close prisoners within our hut. Not one in twenty gets a good view from the top of Snowdon. Miserable though the day was, parties with ladies ascended to the top looking like drenched mice, dismal of aspect, dripping at every salient angle of their faces.

'Descended at three o'clock in the midst of a deluge of rain. On arriving, obliged to go to bed.'

Undefeated, he continued his tour till he reached Keswick, the last stage, involving being on foot for thirteen hours. He sailed on Derwent Water, 'in my estimation the Queen of the English Lakes.'

In 1859 Mr. Alison was ordained to the Middle Church, and Mr. Mac Gregor found in him the first of the two colleagues who were to be so closely united with him in friendship and work. At his April Communion in this year there were

seven tables, at which were 680 communicants, and he thankfully notes 'Most comfortable throughout.' He was back in the Lake country again in the spring, and ascended Skiddaw, where better weather greeted him than on Snowdon, and he says, 'There were no tourists.' During this tour he says, 'Saw English service for the dead. A great improvement on ours.' This was at Ulverston, where he met the 'Rev. Samuel Robertson, curate, who showed us great kindness. I obtained from his conversation considerable insight into the working of the English Church.' In the next church where he worshipped he 'heard a sermon against Puseyism.'

On his return to Paisley he writes of 'Mr. Lees in Abbey,' and this was the arrival of the third of that trio who filled the Abbey, the High, and the Middle Kirk.

Mr. Cameron Lees was minister of Strathconan in Rossshire—a remote and wild deer forest, with a scattered population. The Disruption had depleted the congregation of the Church of Scotland, and Mr. Lees' voice was heard in a wilderness of empty pews and mouldering walls.

The Duke of Abercorn had come across the young preacher, and had seen his fitness for another sphere. He was patron of the Abbey, the splendid ruin, turned by 'restoration' into the proverbial barn, which was the idea of the Lord's house in Scotland a hundred years ago. He offered the charge of the Abbey Church to Mr. Lees, and the hermit of the glens came down to take up his work in the city of the plains. Great was the excitement of the two ministers awaiting Mr. Lees, whose early fate had been that which Mac Gregor had thought of as the only sort of charge he was likely to have offered to him. Mac Gregor had, at once, been flung into the heaviest work the Church has to give to its ministers, and very soon he was to quit the city for the quiet of the country. Mr. Lees had had his experiences among the barren fastnesses of the hills, and the yet harder natures of their inhabitants, and from his lonely eyrie he had been called to the dusky highways of the town.

He alone survives to tell the tale of the meeting. The two, already established and settled, waited the coming of the big Highlander. What was he like? how would he appear? With excitement they peered from the windows of their lodging as Mr. Lees came up the brae to see them. He had the bearing and clothing of the countryman. Dr. Mac Gregor in after years said he was the first to shake by the hand the new minister of the Abbey. He, in his turn, looked with surprise on his young brother in the ministry. The small stature—the powerful voice—the ardent impulsive excitement—the restless vivacity which prevented his ever sitting still. Even as they sat together at the dinner-table the wild Mac Gregor would be up and down, declaiming, illustrating by action and voice, and roaring with merry laughter over the humours of the discussion. Then follow the many anecdotes concerning Mr. Lees and his gifts in the pulpit. The best known, perhaps, is the slow dictum of one of the hearers, 'Yon lad will gar' Mac Gregor and Alison pu' up their breeks.'

It was the beginning of a goodly fellowship, and of a great ministry in the town, one that was strengthened by the feeling that none of the three were working single-handed. 'Comrades all,' and shoulder to shoulder, they laboured in the heavy charges which were placed on such young and inexperienced shoulders.

CHAPTER III

PALESTINE

1861

'A handful of red sand, from the hot clime
Of Arab deserts brought.

. . . . . .

How many weary centuries has it been
About those deserts blown!
How many strange vicissitudes has seen,
How many histories known!'

AS the year 1860 dawned the minister of the High Church writes in the yet blank pages of his diary:

'Oh, my God! I desire to begin this year with Thee. Mercifully forgive the transgressions of the year which has just gone.

'Accept of my thanks for the great mercy shown me through its course.

'Enable me to realise Thy Presence as continually with me during the year which has just drawn its natal breath. Should I not see its close, may Thy Spirit so guide me that the last day which sees me on earth may be the first which sees me in heaven.

'I commend to Thy care my precious soul, and the souls of all my kindred and congregation.'

In 1857, in his correspondence, we find traces that his thoughts had turned on marriage. Mrs. Barclay, writing to him, says, 'I am glad to hear you are now beginning to think of matrimony; at all events you appear to have taken the first step towards it, namely, falling in love. You did not say much about the young lady, but I suppose you are reserving all particulars till we meet. There is no one I know more

in want of a wife, and no one more deserving of a good one, than my much-valued minister.'

'Don't be in a hurry,' writes another friend. 'Look before you leap. Much more than tongue can tell depends upon a minister's wife. Wherever you look for her, don't look below you. This advice is the result of experience, better, longer, and more varied than yours, and may be relied upon.'

Golden advice on either side, but in this and in all his life's battle Mac Gregor was to buy his own experience, and the choice made was to affect his whole history in no ordinary way. He had early schooled himself in the belief that marriage was not to be his lot in life. It did not enter into his outlook, any more than did the city charges which were one after another to be accepted or refused by him. He had an exaggerated view as to his physical defects, and a very fastidious taste as to the beautiful and refined in friendship, also a deep and reverent outlook on all that should form the marriage bond; and believing as he did, that in himself he was not fitted to share his life with any one, he kept his mind on his work, and his heart for his friends.

Two of them were the constant companions of his restless wanderings. The ill-fated Mr. George M'Corkindale and Mr. Sandie. With them he had taken his first continental journey; both were to wander east with him; and when the stress of his work, and yet more the high pressure of his preaching, made a rest and change of scene a matter of necessity to him, he usually secured them for his travelling companions.

In the beginning of the year he was offered the charge of St. Stephen's Church, Glasgow. This he refused as he had done others.

In the first year of his ministry his Bible Class had presented him with a gold watch. His warm heart always responded to these tokens of affection, and in his words of thanks we find him overflowing with cordial reminiscences.

'Not one unpleasant hour have I spent during my short incumbency. Everything that could gratify an honourable pride, everything that could draw forth the better feelings of

the heart, everything that could excite and foster sympathy, friendship, and esteem—all have been mine. Truly I hope and pray that God may be pleased to make my life and my labour useful among you, and that when He sees no more need for me in the vineyard, and is pleased to call me hence, my last hours may not be embittered by the thought that I left one duty undone, that I gave offence to an individual, that I wounded, however slightly, the heart of a friend, or said one single word that I would wish withdrawn.

'I have made many friends among you, friends that I have good reason to believe will continue such till all earthly friendship be broken.

'Allow me, young ladies, to thank you for your handsome present, and for the grateful feelings you have been the means of giving me. Allow me, young men, again to thank you for setting so good an example to your fellows by your regular attendance on my class, and for the proofs your answers to the prescribed questions have afforded of the pains you were at in mastering the subjects. Allow me to thank all of you for your patience in listening to this long, disjointed, egotistical harangue.'

In 1860 the inevitable 'handsome silver tea service' was presented to him by the ladies of his congregation, and in acknowledging it we find some words on his relationship to his people. He tells them this proof of their esteem will be a new incentive to faithfulness in the discharge of his ministerial duties. 'Next to the favour and blessing of God the affectionate regard of his people is most dearly prized by a minister.'

Early in the year he preached on the duty of giving 'a stated portion of our substance for religious purposes.' His congregation were probably not less generous than others of their time and place. To be hard-fisted in giving to the work of the Church raised his wrath then as it did throughout his life. No one had a greater power of turning the naturally penurious Scot into a cheerful giver. His attack was always direct and open. The honour he bestowed in asking for a free gift he put foremost, and those he asked soon saw that they had better regard it in the same light as did their minister.

At a soirée of his congregation he gave them his views on the subject. Obviously, he had met with some 'thrawnness' on the part of at least one member, and he was determined not to speak 'trash as to babies,' but to give them a bit of himself. The address presents a picture of his people, both living and vital; and the way their minister dashes from praise to admonition, from harmless caricature to a living statement of his mission, is as amusing and real as on the day when it was spoken in the crowded room, which always was the accompaniment of his meetings.

'*Nov.* 1860.

'I have been now five years your minister, and it would be a very happy reflexion if I thought that you could all say the same of me as I can say of you. Within the last week, I have said that since I came to Paisley I have never had one annoyance. I have received only two anonymous letters, and if I recollect rightly the first referred to some doctrine preached not by myself but a brother. The second was to the effect that a gentleman had taken too many seats for himself.

'Here, I may mention that of the 1200 seats which form the town property, that is the gallery, during the first half year of my incumbency (when I was very popular) 153 were let, and at last half term 757. When one reflects that a gentleman takes two sittings, and crowds in seven, that may account for the well-filled galleries and the comparatively small return to the Town Council.

'I have been twitted by a dissenting clergyman of the town as to the fulness of the High Church—that a man may there get "the Gospel preached, *in a way*, for naething."

'Thank God! So long as there is an inch of room in the High Church, I invite, as I do publicly, every man who wishes to hear the Gospel, and I hereby proclaim that he shall get it freely and fully for "naething."

'But another explanation to which I do not so readily accord is that Mr. Mac Gregor has "a most voluminous vocabulary," the utterance of a quondam beadle of the High Kirk.

'One thing I am thankful for, that beyond preaching and visiting I get everything done to my hand. All the im-

portant work of a congregation (Mission Society, Sabbath Schools, etc.) is done by the congregation, and that is the right thing. A congregation is a large human machine for doing God's work, and unless efficient members bear a hand the thing must fall to the ground.

'I can brag the world for a better session, or a better set of deacons. They are but two. The one fault about them is, that being so few, the only work I can set them to is standing at the plate, and one of them is incomparable in the way of snuff. The moment I come up the brae, in go the fingers into the box, up goes a great wholesome sneeze, and lo! the brain is as clear, I hope not as cold, as ice. Blame *him* for some of the dreich forenoon prelections. The fault is not entirely my own. I'll take my share.

'The session are *dutiful*. I here return them my cordial thanks for all their forbearance and kindness. One thing I can say of them, they may quarrel a little among themselves; they never quarrel with me. I never yet brought before them a measure which, though sometimes with wry faces, and as if something were sticking in their throats, they did not most cordially and unanimously concur in.

'As for the superintendent and teachers of our Sabbath Schools, they are beyond all praise. I know their devotedness. They have under them no fewer (I should say) than 450 scholars. The congregation is under a deep debt of gratitude to them.

'The directors, and more especially the collectors, of our missionary association,—they must meet with many a rebuff. Now and then (I hope—I believe not in the High Church congregation) people are to be met with so sunk in hopeless idiotcy, so given over to a reprobate mind, that when a person calls on some charitable purpose intent for a collection which is not in the least degree to profit them, or go into their pockets, they are dealt with as beggars and thieves, as scoundrels, and shown to the door.

'Now, I say to my collectors: Don't be a bit abashed because of this. Get courage from it. If you could find a quiet and clean corner of the pavement, go down on your knees and pray for them. There are many who cannot give. We don't expect a farthing from them. It would be wrong of them to give it. He who hurts himself, hurts his nearest neighbour. Charity begins at home is a capital, sound, Christian aphorism, if uttered by a Christian heart,

and seen in all its bearings by a Christian eye. Instead of taking from we shall most gladly help those that cannot give.

'I never yet turned from my door, nor shall I ever turn, I hope, a poor person whom I had reason to believe deserving of help.

'Yet this I say, while out of no flattery I praise my congregation for what they have done, I tell them, as I would have greater reason to tell the wealthiest congregation of the Church of Scotland, that they don't understand the nature of giving.

'We must go to the U.P., to the Free, to the Independent churches for that.

'A famous beadle of my church, who was keenly alive to the value of a shilling, used to say of those who came to the church for baptism, and left without giving him the usual fee: "Puir things! better couldna be expected of them; they dinna understand the natur' o' baptism!"

'What do you think of a U.P. minister who comes home and tells me that at an extraordinary collection they have raised £150, when I know my congregation with much ease could have raised a thousand?

'Alas! many don't understand the nature of Christianity, which is one great giving from beginning to end. Christ, God's Son, was a gift. The salvation He has procured us is a gift. The sacrifice which got that salvation is a gift. Heaven, with all its eternal felicities, is a gift—a free, a full, a perfect gift. And yet for Christ's cause there are men who can, and who will, do nothing!

'It is astonishing, the forms, the methods, the vacant excuses which people will sometimes adopt—people with wealth—to get off from giving to God a little of what God has given so lavishly to them.

'The only person whom I ever solicited for an object not at all concerning myself, but concerning more the church of which I am minister, amazed me by the multiplicity of the wonderful schemes by which he could effect the object I had in view. A brain so prolific in resources, of course, was mindful of its own interests. His projects were all admirable. The only fault was that they were not feasible. They amounted to this: "My dear sir, don't you see the moon is made of green cheese? Sell the seats in the High Church at a higher rent. Let the session pocket the surplus, and with the surplus let

them buy the green cheese, and then sell it. The result will be astonishing. I give you my word of honour as a gentleman, that I shall give my donation as payment for a piece of cheese, and I give you my word of honour till that, or something like it, is done, not one farthing do you get from me." Not one farthing have we ever got, because, I suppose, my session have not come to terms with the man of the moon, and have not purchased the green cheese.

'Poor creature! I learned yesterday that he has taken his money, which is of course himself, to another church, and I do hope that there he will manage first of all to get the green cheese within his reach. The next and most difficult problem is, "Will he buy it?"'

After anecdotes illustrating the penurious ways of some members of the Christian Church, Mr. Mac Gregor concludes:

'Depend upon it, my excellent friends of the High Church, so long as I continue your minister you will hear about the duty of giving on the deafest side of your head. God helping me I shall strive to do my duty. God helping you I hope you will do yours. The world is wide. There are fifty ministers or so in Paisley, pick and choose as you may. And when you think that I am urging you too hard, go over, I pray you, to the U.P. Church, and *try them*! If I have said anything sour, put an additional lump of sugar into your tea!'

In July he kept his twenty-eighth birthday. Writing to Mrs. Barclay he says:

'Your note for the first time put me in remembrance that this was my natal day. I was in the most total oblivion that another year had been added to the term of my existence, and thus another solemn reminder that my working day of twelve hours, given me by my Heavenly Father, is nearer its close. Strange, my thoughts last week were very forcibly directed to this subject while writing a sermon on the text, "Are there not twelve hours in the day?"'

In the spring Mr. Mac Gregor went home, where he always found rest, and he had long walking expeditions with his brother to Blairgowrie by the lochs, and to Coupar Angus. He also preached twice in Scone Parish Church.

In July comes the word, not for the first time, 'thoroughly worn out,' and he goes to Glencoe with Mr. M^cCorkindale and Mr. Campbell. 'Slept at Crianlarich, had a cast in Loch Dochart, coach to Banavie—Ben Nevis in mist,' is the flying record.

In August he was again through the Highlands and Islands. Skye occupied most of his time.

'Walked to Storr, eight miles. Thence to Quiraing, twelve miles through a fearful bog. Storr the most wonderful scene. In many ways the most wonderful I ever witnessed. Visited Quiraing. Like the ruins of some Titanic Palace. Walked thence to Uig, ten miles. Met the Rev. Mr. M'Donald. Drove to manse of Snizort. Walked in the evening to Portree, seven miles.

'Went over the hills to Coruisk. Fearful rain. Cuchullin hills grand. A wild road along seashore to Cambusundry. Thence to Kilmarie. Crossed Loch Slapin in Captain Beaumont's boat. Drove to manse of Strath, stayed all night—walked nineteen miles.

'Left Mr. Sandie there. Drove to Kyleakin. Boat to Balmacarra. Drove across the hills to Strome Ferry. Reached Loch Carron manse at 6 P.M. The Rev. Mr. Mackenzie, a rare old fellow—father of the Church of Scotland. Experienced the utmost kindness. Dispensed the Communion at Loch Carron. M^cCorkindale drove to Applecross, twenty miles, to preach. I preached at Loch Carron.

'*Sept.* 4.—We all drove and rode to Corry Pot, a wild hollow with a tarn in the heart of the hills, above Loch Kishorn. On the 5th Rev. Kenneth and self started for Falls of Glomach. Heavy mist on the hill, which cleared off. After walking three hours took the wrong road, and at 3.30 found ourselves at Strome Ferry. Walked seven miles over the hill to manse of Lochalsh.

'*Sept.* 6.—Spent last night with good Hector Maclean, a great Ossianist and theologian.

'Left at 11 A.M. to catch steamer at Balmacarra. Sat on the rocks waiting for four mortal hours, and wrote part of sermon on Matt. v. 6.'

When he reached home he heard Lord Brougham in the City Hall, Social Science Association. 'The most wonder-

ful exhibition of physical and moral power I have ever witnessed.' The next day he saw Lord Brougham receive the freedom of the town.

In July he had kept the fifth anniversary of his first preaching in Paisley.

In the same month appears that name which was to be so closely linked with his own through the future years. 'Left for Lochgoilhead, with Mr. and Mrs. Hutchison and the Misses Robertson, for Inveraray. One of the merriest days I ever spent.' Mr. and Mrs. Hutchison were members of his congregation, and the Misses Robertson were Mrs. Hutchison's sisters. They lived with their father, Mr. David Robertson, bookseller and stationer in Glasgow. It was in the house of the Hutchisons that Mr. Mac Gregor first saw Helen Robertson, and there and then felt that he had made acquaintance with one who had taken possession of his mind. The thought of her did not as a whole produce 'merry days' in his tempest-tossed heart. He was worn with work and with waging an internal conflict, in which no sympathy could help him. A longer rest and a change of scene became necessary. His health began to show unmistakable signs that he must break with his work for a longer season. An expedition was planned through the Sinai Peninsula, Palestine, and the Levant. He had his usual travelling companions, Mr. McCorkindale, the minister of Gourock, and Mr. George Sandie. The party later on were joined by four English clergymen, travellers bent on making the same tour.

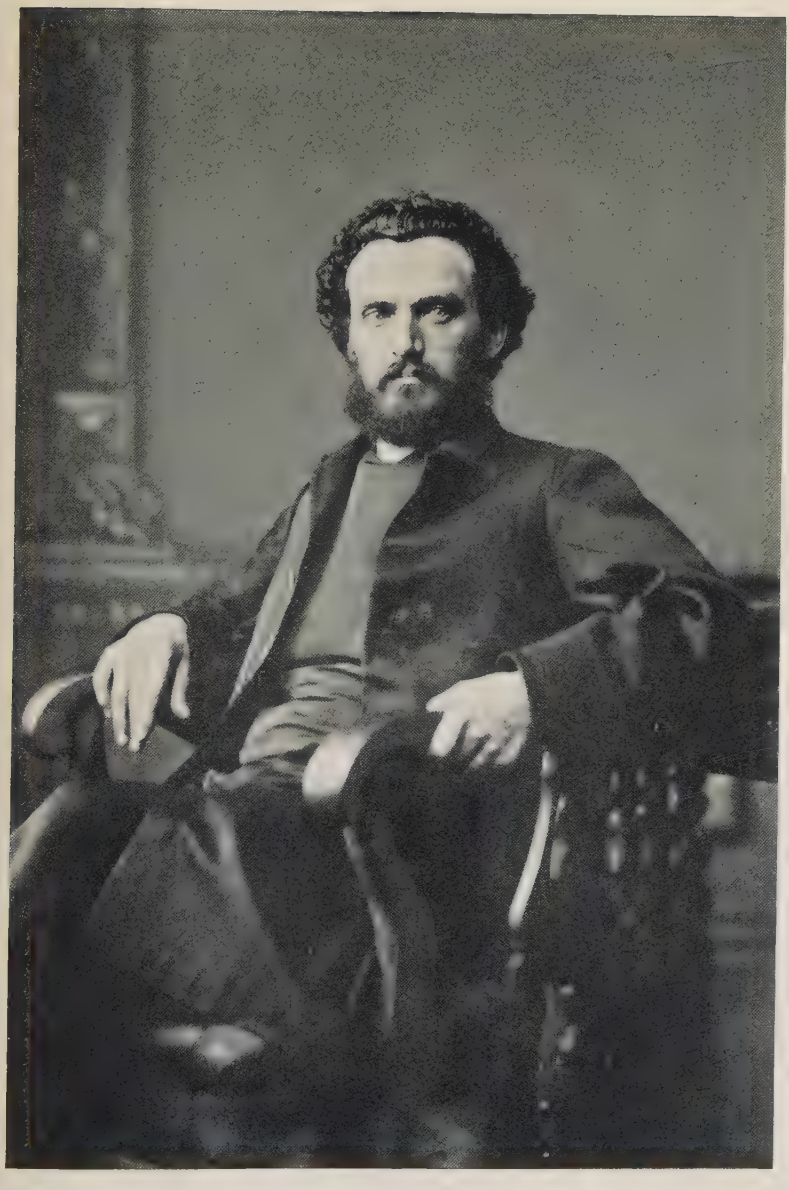
The Rev. George Sandie was the U.P. minister of Gourock. After his travels he became the author of a well-known work on Sinai and Palestine. He gave up his charge and went to London, his friend Mac Gregor laughingly saying that 'Scotland was too small for him.' Later on he adds, 'Sandie's book is giving great satisfaction. Dean Stanley expresses himself pleased with it.'

His other companion was the Rev. George McCorkindale, minister of Gourock. He was a man greatly beloved both in his parish and among his many friends. The story of his

tragic end in later years rang through Europe, and near the close of Dr. Mac Gregor's life the everlasting snow and ice rendered up to the world relics of the party that was lost in the year 1870. M^c^Corkindale was a great mountaineer, and he had organised a party of eleven to ascend Mont Blanc. They reached the top. A terrible storm, which lasted three days, overtook them there. A writing found in the pocket of one of the party bore these words: 'We have been here for three days in a hole dug out in the snow. My limbs are frozen.' Not one of them survived to tell the tale. When strength and hope had left them they had crawled out from their cave, 'and as they walked they fell, as they fell they lay, as they lay they died.' Mr. M^c^Corkindale's dead hand held the English Prayer Book. Dr. Mac Gregor preached his funeral sermon to a bereaved people 'bathed in tears.'

Mac Gregor threw himself body and soul into the expedition to the Holy Land, and was himself the life of it. His great regret was that he found himself unable to converse in their own tongue with all the kindreds and races that he met. At once he began that study of languages which was his great delight, a study which he never completely laid aside throughout his life. He soon enabled himself to read most of the European tongues with ease, Italian and Spanish being his favourites. To speak fluently at least two foreign tongues was, he would say, a necessity for those who claimed to be educated; and he would add, that any one travelling should endeavour to sketch, however indifferently. This was in accordance with what might be called his impressionist temperament.

Had he been an artist with the brush, it would never have been out of his hand. His pen was ever ready. What he saw with his eager vision, what he heard with his receptive hearing, never insular, prejudiced, or narrow, he instantly noted down on scraps of paper, often in a hand so minute a microscope is necessary for the deciphering. Outlines of hills, and fabrics, were roughly sketched, inscriptions copied, pictures commented on. He took nothing for granted, all things were new in his eyes; and of nature, and



THE REV. JAMES MACGREGOR, D.D.

of the hand of God in nature, he took note with reverent, happy affection.

The far journey to the East was one long pleasure expedition, and for the time it enabled him to keep at bay the insistent thoughts and claims on his future life. Away from his work, and separated from those around whom the tendrils of his heart were, against his will, twining for weal and for woe, he had a short dispensation from care. His preparations for the journey were carefully made, and elaborate lists drawn out of all the things he thought necessary for his desert life. A complete suit of shepherd's plaid, and a revolver, were part of his kit. He practised this weapon with such rash zeal, that on one occasion he nearly shot himself. Mr. Cameron Lees was present on the occasion and remarked, 'You nearly got by a short cut to the New Jerusalem then.' 'It is nothing,' replied Mac Gregor, and continued his exercises till he believed himself master of the revolver, and his life and those of his neighbours were out of immediate jeopardy.

His letters to his constant friend Mrs. Barclay, and his carefully kept journals, best tell the fulness of his life in his own words :

'CAIRO, *March* 2, 1861.

'MY DEAR MRS. BARCLAY,—It is now nearly three weeks since we left Scotland, and we have not yet begun our desert pilgrimage. We have had a most delightful passage from Marseilles to Alexandria, which occupied something less than six days. We left Marseilles on the morning of Saturday the 17th February, and were in Alexandria on Saturday about three o'clock—an unusually short passage for even the best steamers of the Messageries Imperiales line. The weather was everything that we could wish—ditto, ditto, our English fellow-passengers, of whom there were only four, the rest being dirty Frenchmen on their way to help forward the impracticable undertaking of the Suez Canal. We touched at Malta, and after visiting the Lions of La Valetta had time to drive seven miles through the island to St. Paul's Bay. To a stranger for the first time eastward bound, everything about Malta is thoroughly

novel — earth, sea, sky, men, and cattle, horses and husbandry, trees and flowers : all present aspects striking in the highest degree. The palm, the fig, the olive, and the acacia flourish as on a congenial soil. The houses, more especially the dwellings of the peasantry, one of which may be seen in the corner of every little field, realise exactly the impression which one has formed from reading of the houses of Palestine, being small square buildings of solid stone, flat on the roof, and the windows and doors opening into a courtyard, the walls of which are a prolongation of the house. I question if there is another such busy bustling little island in the world. Every field, as we passed along, seemed swarming with work-people—strong, healthy, dark-visaged men and women ; some ploughing with rickety wooden ploughs, some pumping up water from the wells which are in almost every field, and others directing it in little runnels along the soil, and some cutting down clover three feet high. We saw crops in all stages of advance : here the green braird just appearing, there barley in the ear, and beans in bloom. One thing which gave us immense pleasure was, that the island to all appearance can never be wrenched from England so long as she retains a shred of her present power. To have any idea of the enormous strength of La Valetta, one must see with his own eye its long lines of ramparts, hewn out of the solid rock, line within line bristling with cannon. I have been told that for the last few years not a ship-of-war has anchored at Malta without leaving a portion of her heavy guns behind her, and that a three years' stock of provisions sufficient for a whole army is always kept in hand. Considering the present threatening appearances in Europe, and the commanding position which Malta gives us in the Mediterranean, it is a source of satisfaction that not even Gibraltar is more strongly fortified.

'You know how anxiously one expects the first glimpse of any scene or country sacred from its associations. The first sight of Egypt, and of Africa, to one approaching Alexandria from the west, has nothing to recommend it but its association. On the right you behold a dimly defined line, which you can hardly distinguish from the horizon. Gradually as it stands out in greater vividness you see a low-lying line of sand—not at all unlike the coast-line of Holland, saving that here and there it is broken at intervals

by two or three dark ridges, which you are told are clumps of palm trees. Gradually, as you come closer still, the Dutch look of the coast is heightened by a vast number of windmills, employed I suppose to grind the Pasha's corn. You have a capital view of Alexandria from the sea. It looks a substantial, well-built, bustling place. I daresay that most travellers, as well as myself, are more struck with the hubbub at landing from the steamer than with anything else about this far-famed city. It positively baffles all description. The moment the steamer anchors in the Eunostus Harbour, she is surrounded by a fleet of gaily-painted, strangely-fashioned boats, each with the banner of the crescent flying at the stern and manned by two or three of the natives, their dresses of every imaginable colour, as also their faces, ranging from a slightly bronzed tan to an ebony blackness. They spring over the ship's sides like cats, shouting and gesticulating in a manner painful to hear and see. In a moment your trunk is on the back of one, your portmanteau on the back of another; and it requires an amount of vigilance and activity, of which few are possessed, to ensure that you and each portion of your luggage do not reach shore in a separate boat. But the hubbub at the steamer is positive and paradisaic quietude to the uproar at the quay. Hundreds of big black scoundrels are waiting to pounce upon you, yelling, gibbering, dancing, and striking at each other in the laudable effort to secure the honour of accompanying you to your hotel. Such a scene I never witnessed before, and have no desire to witness again. Having selected one of the ragamuffins, we had only to wait a few seconds ere he was back with a long low cart of primeval construction, in which the baggage of six of us was placed, and off he set through the narrow crowded streets—one of us mounted behind, and one on each side as guard; the rest bringing up the rear. The first stoppage is at the Custom House. A turbaned Turk is coolly inspecting the luggage of an earlier arrival. It will take him hours and hours to go through the cart-load of trunks and boxes belonging to our party. So, thankful for once for the system of bribery that universally prevails in this country, our dragoman is instructed to give him a few shillings, and the rascal passes us with simply opening one of our numerous boxes. On we go to the Hotel Abbat, bewildered in the maze of narrow winding streets densely crowded with

men and women of every shade of colour and every variety of race. Both in Alexandria and Cairo, with the exception of a random European, there is only one thing common to the multitudes you meet in the streets, viz., that they are beings such as you never saw before. Before dinner we had our first ride on the great vehicle of this country—the donkey; a little, long-winded, hardy, and sagacious animal. You cannot move a step here without being surrounded with donkeys and their drivers—the latter decidedly the more wonderful animal of the two. The Alexandrian donkey-driver is a first-class linguist, speaking French, German, Italian, English, Turkish, and Arabic with equal facility, though by no means with equal accuracy. "This good donkey—captain—very good—to Pompey's Pillar for one bob. My donkey, captain—good donkey, gentleman," are some of the unfailing cries. The only things worth seeing in Alexandria are Pompey's Pillar, which is not his pillar, and Cleopatra's Needle, with which that lady had nothing to do; the Pharos lighthouse, and the Mahmoudieh Canal, which supplies Alexandria with water and connects the Nile with the sea.

'It was constructed or rather cleaned out and repaired by Mehemet Ali. Two hundred thousand men were employed in the work, of whom 20,000 died for want of proper food and shelter. It is forty-seven miles in length, and has the peculiarity of being nowhere a straight line, the reason being that as God made rivers to wind Mehemet Ali did not feel himself justified in making his canal straight. One other object well worthy of a visit, which I had nearly forgot to mention, is the Catacombs. They are on the shore of the Eunostus Harbour, to the west of the town. Those nearest the town and close to Cleopatra's Bath have been very recently excavated. You enter from the sea, and just a little above sea level, by a long passage cut out of the solid rock. To the right and left as you proceed are niches for the reception of sarcophagi, as well as small chambers beautifully plastered for the same purpose; likewise, large irregular crypts. Here and there are piles of human bones, which a single touch reduced to dust. Indeed, the earth in these caverns has that oily greasy *feel* which tells that it is largely composed of bones.

'Farther on are the Catacombs better known as such. The best idea which can be conveyed of these is that of an

underground temple of stately proportions with the façade opening on the sea. The entire shore at this part seems to have been cut out into niches for the dead.

'On Sunday I preached in the forenoon in the Seaman's Chapel, a substantial ship, which, at the request of Mr. Colquhoun, H.B.M.'s Consul General, was presented by Said Pasha, the Viceroy of Egypt, to the Rev. W. Yule, our missionary at Alexandria, as a place of worship for the sailors of English and American ships lying in the harbour. This was a noble and generous act on the part of His Highness, as it must have cost him not less than £2000. We had a most pleasant meeting, the attendance being between twenty and thirty, many of whom were sailors. It is gratifying to learn that many of our sailors are truly pious men. Mr. Yule told me that the week before last, when crossing the harbour in his boat, he was invited on board a Man-of-War, and learned that the first lieutenant had a prayer-meeting every week, which was attended by the captain and most of the men, and that the effect upon the crew was very evident. I preached in the afternoon in the Prussian Church, where worship is regularly conducted by Mr. Yule.

'*Monday, March* 4.—Yesterday Mr. Sandie preached in the American Mission here, and dispensed the Sacrament of the Supper. There were no less than eleven clergymen in the audience, seven of whom are of the party who leave with us to-day for the desert of Sinai. We all thankfully partook of the Communion. We return in about three weeks to Cairo, and thence to Jerusalem.

'I do hope that things have been going on as favourably in the High Church as they have with the High Church minister. More glorious weather than we have had in Egypt, or a more glorious country in which to enjoy it, could not be found.

'The whole party of us travel through Palestine together, along with two English gentlemen, so that we may laugh at all sorts of danger.—I am, my dear Mrs. Barclay, yours very truly, JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

'MOUNT MORIAH, JERUSALEM,
'*March* 29, 1861.

'MY DEAR MRS. BARCLAY,—I embrace the opportunity of a friend's just leaving for England to write you a letter

on Good Friday, and close beneath the Temple Walls. After a most pleasant and interesting tour through the Peninsula of Sinai, and a rough passage from Alexandria in a rolling French steamer which turned every passenger on board sick but M^c^Corkindale, we arrived at Joppa on Tuesday night, and with great difficulty and no little danger were landed in small boats on Wednesday morning. We looked about Joppa, the oldest city almost in the world; visited the house of Simon the Tanner, and stood on the roof where Peter had his Vision; visited a farm in the management of Dr. Phillips, missionary, in the plain of Sharon, one of the most fertile districts I have ever seen, and were off for Jerusalem on horseback by four in the afternoon. That night we spent in a Latin Convent at Ramleh, where we were most hospitably entertained by the monks. Next morning we were up by daybreak, and after winding for hours through the beautiful hills and along the execrable roads of Judea, we caught our first glimpse of Jerusalem at four o'clock. I rode on in front of our party, and after a hard ride to be the first of the party to see the old walls of the sacred city was beat by one. It is somewhat strange that we entered Jerusalem on the very night on which our dear Saviour was betrayed—but not strange surely that we met, a little party in an upper room, and partook of the Sacrament together. One of our companions officiated, and in the most affecting manner broke to us the bread of life. He prayed for all our dear friends and for our separate congregations, and as one of our friends leaves to-night alluded to the fact that we should never all meet in this world again, and hoped that a still more sacred meeting should be our lot in the Jerusalem which is above. What added to the solemnity of the scene was that the bread which was broken was the true paschal cake.

'About this hour as I write—three o'clock—our Saviour suffered and died very near this place. May our interest in these sufferings ever deepen as we journey through life!

'In great haste.—Yours truly,

'JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

'JERUSALEM, *April* 12, 1861.

'MY DEAR MRS. BARCLAY,—We have stayed much longer in Jerusalem than we originally intended, and our arrival home must be proportionally delayed till the end of

May, as our tickets were taken for the steamer in Paris, and she does not go direct from Beyrout to Marseilles, but round by Constantinople and Greece, occupying three weeks nearly in the passage. The country through which we travel is in a somewhat unsettled state, and we have been therefore obliged to wait till we found a large party to journey northwards. There are fourteen of us leaving on Monday together, one of whom is Dr. Barclay, long a resident in this country, and author of one of the best books on Jerusalem, *The City of the Great King*. It is currently believed here that the withdrawal of the French troops will be followed by very disastrous consequences. A week ago a gentleman resident here was attacked by Mohammedans as he was going home, and left for dead. With our large party we may laugh at all thoughts of danger.

'We have been very much pleased with our long stay in Jerusalem. Every moment of our time has been occupied, and every place of interest visited—Olivet, Gethsemane, Bethany, Hinnom; and the places of traditional interest—Calvary, Golgotha, etc. We spent three days in an excursion to Jericho, the Jordan, and the Dead Sea. We have been twice to Bethlehem and once to Hebron. Every spot in Jerusalem and the neighbourhood is holy ground. The city itself is a city of ruins. I hope yet to weary you with accounts of it.

'My health, I am happy to say, has been very good, although I am a martyr to the fleas and bugs and mosquitoes with which this place abounds. At this moment I am covered with bites, and could scratch my skin off.

'The time is up for posting.—Yours ever truly,

'JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

From diary:

'*Feb.* 11, 1861.

'The seven of us left for Palestine on the 13th *viâ* Southampton and Havre. Marseilles was left on the 17th. Our fellow-passengers chiefly French. Two young English Quakers, Pease, bound for Palestine. Three Spanish monks of the order of St. Francis going to serve for six years in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Five Moors in white sackcloth and turbans going to Damascus: stout, truculent-looking fellows, whom one would not like to meet on a dark night. Three days of voyaging, on the first to find the

hills of Corsica melting away behind us. The bleak, rugged, bluff hills of Sardinia close on our right, and the island of Caprera, equally barren, close on our left. Saw the white house of Garibaldi with the pointed, grey hill behind it. Another glowing day. Partly spent in the delightful, listless inactivity superinduced by sailing over a sunny sea.'

On the 22nd he says he is getting stronger every day, and the next full entry is written from the top of the Great Pyramid:

'Left Cairo for the Pyramids, party of eight. View of them at foot disappointing. Reached top at six o'clock. Sun rapidly nearing the horizon, purpling the barren Libyan hills with a rich glow. To the west and the south the deserts stretched as far as eye could see, the rich bright green of the Nile belt contrasting with the border of barren, desert sand. To the north the rich land of the Delta, here and there broken by villages, spreading like a carpet, and melting in the far distance. With our large party no fewer than thirty-six Arabs ascended and descended the Great Pyramid, in the hopes of getting backsheesh. Their unceasing chatter at the top greatly disturbs one's enjoyment of the glorious view. Much indebted for their assistance. They draw one from ledge to ledge with amazing rapidity, singing as they go. More indomitable and annoying beggars are not to be met with in the world.

'*March* 4.—Left Cairo for Suez. Railway goes over a vast sandy waste covered with gravel or rounded flints. On road we saw for the first time mirage. So perfect was the illusion in the desert that we instinctively shouted sea! sea! thinking it was the Red Sea, and that we were at our journey's end.

'On our arrival we found our tents pitched. One large new tent of fourteen strings, one new tent of ten strings, and an old fellow full of holes. Picturesque appearance—camels lying down, dinner cooking. Mahmoud Ali very busy. Capital dinner. Curious sensation on first meeting our Arabs. Tents very comfortable. Longways two rough hair rugs, and at right angles another rug. Clean mattress laid on each, and over it a thin sheet. Above, a thick cotton quilt which forms saddle by day. Passage of sand between each tent. Round pole of tent we strap belt with

hooks, on which we hang our clothes, revolvers, etc. Camels fond of the fire, gather round it. Their growl varies from that of a pig to the fierce yell of a lion.

'Up at daybreak. First morning getting under weigh—with camels—great interest and amusement. Tents taken down, bedding—each man's laid on his own dromedary. The canteen, hencoops, chest of eatables, loudest remonstrances. Hubbub at breaking up the encampment—astonishing. Yells or grunts of displeased camels, the shouting of the Bedouin, the bustle of the dragoman. Left Suez *en cavalcade*, eight of us; Mahmoud with his two associates, thirteen Bedouin, and seventeen camels.

'Encamped at six o'clock in Wady Rahah. As I write the sun has just gilded the passage along which many suppose the Israelites passed, and gone down beneath the low-lying land of the valley along which they came from Egypt. Not a tree, or shrub, or vegetable to break the sterility of the scene. Little wonder the poor Israelites longed to get back to Egypt, and yet it is magnificently grand. The camels strayed away. The Bedouin, some busy unloading their baggage, some away over the plain in search of fuel.

'Just after sunset, out under the open sky, we joined in worship. Mr. Coombs read and led, "O God of Bethel." I engaged in prayer.

'A great mistake about the fatigue of camel travelling. Not one of our party complained of pain in the back. It is pleasant, as one can read with ease and even write on the camel's back.

'Up at six. Saw sun rise over the Rahah ridge. Wady Ramlieh, where Israel is said to have crossed the sea on the opposite shore. Here they would be completely hemmed in. At 8.30 entered the broad long plain of Wady Lekhafah. Passed a lonely acacia tree not much larger than a rose-bush.

'Our riding camels not moving as I was led to expect, one at the tail of the other in Indian file, but either abreast or in happy confusion, never so far apart as to prevent conversation when we desire it. Passed the bones of camels fallen in the desert, sometimes tainting the air with insufferable stench.

'I have been struck with the honest look and springy, lithe bodies of our Bedouin. One young fellow about four-

teen, called S'leemah, is positively a beauty. But for his swarthy skin any English father might be proud of him. His finely chiselled features, dark and dazzling eyes, teeth of ivory whiteness, the happy smile that plays on his features when you speak to him, as well as the easy and even elegant positions into which he throws himself as he walks along with the rope of the camel round his shoulders, his only dress the tarbouche and the madas or shirt—all foretell that he may yet be a celebrated son of the desert. The only other portion of our Arabs' dress is the abba or blanket of camel's hair, with holes for the arms and with brown and white stripes; their belt with pipe and flint, matchlock and sandals.

'At 11.15 A.M. Taset Sudr right opposite us. Entered Wady Sudr. Four weeks ago the water rushed down this Wady. It is nothing more than a very slight indentation running across the great plain at right angles to the sea, and dotted as the plain more generally becomes with the poisonous sakkara, and the ghurkud, of which the camel seems to be very fond. These slight runnels are all over the plain. The magnificent range of Ed-deir is now exactly opposite us to the west, skirting the opposite shore of the gulf, and running from N.W. to S.E. We are evidently on the great highway to Sinai. There are no less than sixteen parallel footpaths formed by the camels within the space of as many yards.

'Immediately after sunset had as usual our evening service of praise and prayer. Hall read Ps. cv. Dale conducted the devotions. Worship was never once neglected during our sojourn in the wilderness.

'At 5.40 pitched our tents. Arabs on foot since seven without breaking bread. Their good humour and patience undisturbed. Another glorious sunset behind Jebel Deir, the colour of which at this moment is a rich bluish purple against a sky of crimson. The Red Sea stretches along its base, much the same as the Clyde at Gourock. Behind us, in the east, night is already beginning to descend upon the hills. The scene of our encampment, with the exception of these glorious mountains and that glittering sea, the most sterile on which the eye can gaze. After sunset had as usual our evening service of prayer and praise.

'Off in the morning at seven on foot. The Wady Amara differs from the rolling plains of the last two days, hillocks of sand and gravel, sat on one—fossil shells. Sky pleasantly

clouded, heat tempered, have not suffered from heat since we left Cairo. Came on solitary well in the rock a few yards off the road which marks the Marah of Scripture. A solitary palm-bush and a few scraggy bushes. The Arabs cry "Moi murr, moi murr" (bitter water). Amused with the cry or grunt of Mr. Dodds' dromedary. He has been riding on another all day, and on mounting his own, it gives vent to its displeasure in a series of angry growls, evidently deeming itself an ill-used brute in being obliged to carry such a burden. A peculiarity of the camel, a terrific hubbub and ado the moment you offer to put anything on its back. Once on, the patient brute trudges along hours and hours without a complaint.

'The plain is more thickly covered with ghurkud shrub, its greyish-yellow, dry, and scraggy look is not much brighter than the stones and sand; but judging from the tacks my camel is at present making to get its mouth within reach of it, the camel must be very fond of it.

'Passed a party of Bedouin, with camels and sheep, going north. The life changeless as the rocks and sand amongst which it is passed. The same people over whom Jethro ruled, and among whom Moses fed his flocks. Friendly salutations passed. The spear of one of these Arabs a long stick pointed with a piece of iron like the sock of a ploughshare, the rude production of a desert forge.

'Passed clumps of the tarfa tree, like juniper, or scrubby pine. Evidence of a large amount of water running in winter, also bushes of palm thick and thorny. Small bird, and several flocks of pigeons. A little way down the Wady stopped for lunch at a small well dug out of the sand of the Wady, where the Bedouin filled their water-skins, and gave the camels to drink. Tasted the water—not unpleasant; the supposed Elim further down, and will be visited on our return. Caught our first glance of the blue ridge of Serbal. Quantities of retem or broom, the tree under which Elijah lay. Also, the acacia or shittim wood.

'At five crossed a rocky ridge dividing Wady Elseit from Wady Asalt. After descending a winding gorge cut through the yellow sandstone, encamped at 6 P.M. in as wild and lonely a spot as any in this world. Bare, sandy hills, rifted into every possible form, are around us. No life moving save in our busy midst. Astonishing in how short a time our four tents are pitched, laying the beds and making all

comfortable. The box containing the fowls turned up. Cook's fires burning brightly, and active preparations making for dinner. The Bedouin have their camp fires lit, their baggage ranged round them to windward, their camels munching beans to leeward, while they themselves are cooking their ample fare in Wady Shebekah.

'*March* 8.—Up before six. Yet dark. Thermometer 70°. Started at seven on foot along the windings of Wady Shebekah, a deep gorge cut out of the soft sandstone hills, which are here torn by the elements as if quarried by human hands. Underneath a large tarfa tree sat down and chanted the *Te Deum*. High bright-coloured walls of sandstone. In this Wady we came to the first stream of running water—shiny, oozy stuff, but still refreshing to look on. Fine palm trees, some large and bushy. One, the best, has been ruthlessly burnt by the Pasha's soldiers. Two charred limbs lying on the ground. The rock scenery truly magnificent; one belted with bands of yellow, black, red, and purple. Specially noticeable on hill close to sea, were seven or eight distinct colours, black and red being most prominent before the rock melts into the ordinary bright yellow sandstone. The Wady here opens out upon the blue sea, on the opposite shore of which is Jebel Abou Deraj, distant about twenty-five miles. Before us Serbal standing alone in his glory. Here met caravans with Bedouin escorts returning from Medina.

'Where the rocks came down to the sea the whole party of us stopped, and had a most delightful plunge in the Red Sea. Shore admirably suited for this refreshing exercise. All agreed it was the most agreeable bath we ever had in our lives.

'We picked up some of the shells with which the beach is strewn, and had lunch of bread, figs, raisins, and oranges, and were fanned by the breezes of the Red Sea.

'Far away to the right on the African shore is the triple head of Gebel Sherif, in front a wild, bleak mass of mountains, and a plain of vast extent surrounded on all sides, save that of the sea, by high hills. Singular to notice how the white sandstone touches the dark red rock. Dark mountains—as dark and wild as Coruisk in Skye.

'Entrance to Wady Shellah, about two hours from the sea, is like a royal road cut through between two white hills of sandstone. At a sudden turn of the valley the

first of the strangely painted hills of the Sinai group bursts upon the view.

'Impossible to give adequate expression to the feelings produced by the first sight. At the bottom a dark blue green runs up into a bright purple, which again gives place to blue surrounded by red. Hills piled ridge upon ridge. Their colouring of the most varied kind—jet black, dark and light brown, yellow and olive green, purple predominating, not a particle of vegetation clothing these rocks. Their stratified appearance everywhere visible. Their arrangement of the most remarkable kind. Like gigantic masses of refuse thrown out from some colossal chemical works at which myriads of giants have for centuries been working.

'The wild weird look of this wonderful place can never be effaced from the mind—struck with the growing grandeur of the scenery along which, as through a vestibule, God's ancient people were conducted to the Temple of Sinai. First, the level desert of Suez, ending with mountain range, then the narrow end of the Red Sea, then the rough mountain range of Rahah, the growing splendour of the hill scenery, the glimpse of the broad sea, and now the wide plains. Step by step their sense of the marvellous world grew upon them, until by degrees they would be trained to bear the glory of Sinai.

'Near our tent a mound almost composed of fossil shells. Floor of the plain covered with the same. Valley of Baderah terminated by a double-peaked mountain of red sandstone. From the number and size of the boulders, it is evident that in the rainy season a large body of water rushes down to the sea. A wild defile through high hills of singular sternness—granite intermingled with the sandstone in such confusion that you can hardly distinguish one from another. First written inscription. We ascended the steep sides of Mogbara to the ancient tunnelling of the Egyptians. You enter by one aperture, and come out by another. The very old hieroglyphic inscriptions are in the portions of the rock that have been hewn out, and are lying at the mouth of the tunnelling. Broken, jagged peaks surround us on every side. Not a particle of vegetation breaks the dreary sterility. Sandie, with Mahmoud, tried the plan of the soaked paper to take an impression of the inscription, and succeeded.

'On descending visited the encampment of Mr. M'Donald. Entertained by him with true Arab hospitality. He had been in this lonely spot since last July. Expedition after gazelles. Waiting for the rains. Ther. at 11.40, 97°.

'Struck with the great valley of Ferian, broad where we entered it, and covered with the ghurkud. Soft stone of the hills has mouldered down and covered the valley with a soil which a little rain, if God would send it regularly, would render productive. Even if the rain which does fall were carefully husbanded, and the Bedouin a little more enterprising, it might be fertile. For hours between lofty mountain walls till night descended and wrapt the whole in gloom.

'*March* 10.—Dale, M°Corkindale, and self started for Serbal. Camels for three miles of the Wady. One or two short rests. Out of all sight the most difficult mountain I ever attempted to ascend. Through a mass of granite, no sure footing. When the ascent proper begins it is like a rough, steep, irregular staircase with broken steps. Our guide trudged along at a furious pace, stepping barefooted from ledge to ledge. Keeping up with him slow murder. Fortunate in the day. Clouds sheltered us from the sun's fierce rays. Were obliged to shelter from several heavy showers of rain.

'Several stones of hard green basalt, covered with rude pictures of goats, ostriches, camels, serpents. Inscriptions noticeable all the way up. We came upon a basin of clear cold water, where we refreshed ourselves, and for the first time, too, in the East, our ears were refreshed with the sound of a gurgling stream, evidently from the melting snow, large quantites of which we passed near the summit.

'From the base, looking up, there are five distinct summits, the fifth of which is smaller than the others. They rise up sheer precipices of granite wall. In appearance utterly inaccessible, their sharp-pointed peaks reaching far up into the sky. Our path between the two most northerly, then behind the second peak, which is the highest, and to the summit between it and the third. Here a narrow cleft covered with aromatic shrubs. The summit is one vast bare boulder.

'Altogether the ascent of this singular mountain impresses one with the belief that if the other conditions of the S.S. narrative are fulfilled, no more solemn and suitable place

for the giving of the Law could possibly be found in the universe. But there is no great plain for the people to encamp. Wady too small and rugged.

'The view from the summit the grandest I have ever seen. The whole peninsula lies before us. No ordinary landscape. Expanse of hills and glens, silent, waste, naked, and desolate, without rivers, without verdure, without life; the rough boulders over which we toiled, some broken hills, semi-circular curve, the base of Sinai beyond. Ramleh, a broad belt of yellow sand. A wide gravelly plateau sweeping northwards miles and miles, melting into the hills of Judah. Eastwards, a wide expanse of loose, jagged, naked, billowy mountains, crest behind crest. The object of our pilgrimage, Sinai, the highest peak. Jebel Mousa rose against the horizon, steeped in the blue of the distance. Southwards, the gulf, Suez, and a cross belt of shimmering sea; leaning against horizon lay the purple hills of Africa.

'We stayed an hour at the top. I would willingly have spent hours gazing at the exceeding beauty of the landscape, though one might search the world through for one more barren and desolate, had not the rich and varied colouring of the hills intersected by the Wadys lent enchantment, and a certain fascination.

'A sharp, cutting, icy wind came blowing, and chilled us to the very marrow, and compelled us to beat a hasty retreat; so, casting a last look at the glorious panorama that lay around us, we scrambled down. By and by we came to the camels, most grateful relief. Glad to get back in the dark, and rest our weary limbs on reaching our tents.

'Our excursion occupied eleven hours. Our friends spent the Sabbath more quietly, examining old monkish records.

'After dinner some Bedouin entertained us with music round the camp fire, their mild expressive faces lighted up with the glare, and changing with the tones of a two-stringed fiddle, from which a black fellow was extracting notes of singular plaintiveness. They seem to delight in this low, mournful music, and were pleased with our presence at the entertainment.

'*March* 11.—Left Ferian, with its extensive gardens of palms—a refreshing spot to the traveller. Turned east through the magnificent gorge of Miko Hawy, the Pass of the Winds; singularly appropriate, as the cold wind made us cover ourselves with coats and shawls. Was reminded

of Glencoe. Then Wady Rahah, the most splendid in the peninsula; four to five miles long, half a mile broad. After a very long day's march we pitched our tents at the opening of the Wady Sherif. Intensely cold. Wind strong, and a miserable time till ten o'clock, when dinner appeared. Doubled our bedding with plaids, overcoats, etc., to keep from starving of cold.

'*March* 12.—Temp. 29°. Water frozen in the tent. Came to the convent of St. Catherine's. Thick and lofty walls, with postern gate. Three or four inner gates. Open court, with quadrangle. Reception room, where we rested. A lay brother brought in coffee, palm-wine, and dates. The superior followed, and said a few words of welcome. Saw the bare cells where the brethren sleep. Ascended Jebel Mousa. No difficulty, a staircase actually up to the top. Two springs of water, chapel of the Virgin, cypress in a hollow, also chapel of Elijah. High, barren, rugged mountains towering on every side form a splendid theatre for the Almighty to appear in His majesty unto His people.

'*March* 13.—Hall, Sandie, and self set out to ascend Ghabel Sena. Only mountain whose Arabic name is like the Sinai of Scripture. Around us chain upon chain of colossal granite hills, rifted and riven by the Almighty hand. Hall sketched, Sandie read from Exodus. I wrote impression produced. A quieter hour of joy I never passed than on that mountain-top. Singular mound which shuts off the plain of Rahah.

'*March* 14.—Forenoon occupied in visiting the convent. Pigeon-holes conducive to prayer. Air of quiet rest breathing about it. Dale declared he would have no objection to spend his days in it. Thirty monks; chapel a neat, well-furnished edifice, with seats for the monks as in Chester Cathedral. Next, the chapel of the Burning Bush. We had to enter barefoot. Recess in the wall, where three lamps are kept continually burning, and believed by the monks to be the identical spot of that wondrous manifestation. The dead-house, in which are preserved the bones of all the monks who die in the convent. Several hundreds of skulls lying in heaps. A solemnising sight!

'*March* 15.—With great regret left our cold though pleasant camping-ground. We had our last glimpse of the mountain range of Sinai. Encamped at the junction of the two Wadys. After dinner gathered bushes of the dry

elimruda, and had a regular bonfire. The flame, ascending up through the dark night, gave us as much pleasure as it did when we were schoolboys years and years ago.

'Travelled on into the Wady Alchadar. Serbal, the noblest mountain in the peninsula, right before us. A miserable dike is passed, thrown up by the Arabs to keep back the soldiers of Mahomet Ali. Pitched our tent in El Ramileh.

'*Sunday, March* 17.—Awake since 10 P.M. with the bumming of big and ugly black-beetles. Wish I could discover the cause of my sleeplessness. Went to visit the tent of our Sheik. Very hospitably entertained. Could see the closely-veiled females, like Sarah of old, peering curiously through chinks. Mahmoud told us it was not *en règle* for strangers to walk in front of these tents, so we had to content ourselves with a peep at the interiors, obtained while coming and going to our camels. As soon as we arrived a sheep was killed, skinned, and put whole into a pot, and in three quarters of an hour we had a steaming, savoury, and most palatable dish of mutton, rice and bread soaked in milk and butter, before us on the ground. We each helped ourselves from the same dish, and did it ample justice. The Arabs looked on in wonderment as we ate, and with the help of Mahmoud we carried on a holy and interesting conversation. Coffee after, as before, the mutton, along with the soup, closed the entertainment.

'The old Nubian slave, a living mummy, wished medicine to make him young again; not afraid to die; afraid he might not have grave-clothes and a coffin. He had never heard of another world. The Bedouin, just as ignorant, listened with wrapt attention, especially the poor old black slave, as Sandie told them about God being their Father, and the love of Christ, and the world to come.

'They do not want education—merely to be allowed to burn their charcoal and carry it to Cairo, and rear their sheep and camels as their fathers did.

'Little children carrying lambs, and women grinding corn as we passed.

'We ascended into the plain of Hussaya. Before us a high hill, exactly like a pyramid; another on a larger scale, like the Sphinx. Abundant traces that the Egyptians were very early at work in this place. Not improbable that the first idea of the Pyramids may have been obtained here, or

from the dark-faced rock to the west. Descent difficult and dangerous. Red sand lying in drifts, like snow, in tons near our tents.

'*March* 18.—Baggage camels went on. Climbed one hour and a half. Ruin of some edifice, probably a temple, on the brink of the ridge. Then descended a rude staircase —aromatic shrubs and large acacia trees. Took lunch, looking back on the wild hills which bound the Sinai range. Down to the plain. Marks of gazelles and trail of serpents. Our tents pitched, and our friends arrived an hour before us.

'*March* 19.—Road between bare walls of limestone, which, reflecting back the sun's rays, made the passage hot even in the morning. Tame after the splendid mountain scenery of Sinai. Here and there beautiful festoons of ivy and rich green. Two hours brought us to the sea. Tiny streamlets rush right out of the limestone rock. Smell offensive, and water so hot that you cannot put your fingers in. Two hours along the Red Sea shore. Came to a large quantity of running water—quite a little pool, where the poor camels, after five days' weary travel without a drop, very gladly refreshed themselves. Saw something like grass for the first time here. Flocks of camels feeding with their young among tarfa trees.

'We encamped at seven after having been on the camel's back since eight. We cut down several branches of the fine palms beside our tent with which to decorate our studies at home.'

The route was now over ground traversed before, and the desert wanderings were nearing an end. The menu of a very large and excellent dinner is given, and a tribute paid both to the cook and to Mahmoud for his catering.

'So well had he managed that we drank the last of the tea and ate the last of the oranges at the conclusion of the expedition.

'I have devoured more of the excellent things of the earth on this trip than I have ever done, and have grown strong thereon.

'*March* 22.—Last day in the desert, and I feel that I could begin again. What a happy, enjoyable life it has been.'

In parting with the Arabs, the minister in his diary says: 'I can only express the wish that I would to God all our professing Christians were as honest and respectable.' From Suez the entries are continued, 'written with a Turkish pen and ink from a Turkish ink-bottle.'

'From there to Cairo—glad to get away from the hubbub and bustle, which, after the quiet of the desert, is quite intolerable; no tour I have ever made has afforded me more unfeigned pleasure than that which has now come to an end. My companions have been everything that one could wish. To their gentlemanly and Christian deportment, their genial character, and their thorough sympathy with the scenes through which we have passed, much of the pleasure of this tour has been owing.

'On arriving in Suez we learned that Lord Elgin had returned from China. We also heard some news of Syria, and heard that the Southern States had finally seceded.'

In Cairo the diary speaks of 'a last ride on the donkeys through the street, and a fourth fall from these untoward brutes.' A safer if more fatiguing railway journey took them to Alexandria. There he interested himself in the mission, 'came to the conclusion that meantime, while the mission should be efficiently maintained, it is not needful to erect mission premises, more especially as the Pasha has so recently given specially to the Church of Scotland the Seaman's Chapel, worth £2000.' From Alexandria the party, still unbroken, went on board ship. They experienced a heavy rolling sea and a pitching vessel, which turned them all upside down. What was worse, there was a danger they could not land at Jaffa. On the 27th March boats came off to them from Jaffa. Landing was difficult and dangerous.

'Visited the house of Simon the Tanner, built on the sea cliff, and stood on the roof where he prayed. After much din and trouble about our horses, we left for Jerusalem.

'Through winding avenues of prickly pears to Dr. Phillip's farm. Soil exceedingly rich, black loam. Garden soil of great depth. Orange trees especially of great beauty;

some oranges last year were seventeen inches in circumference. Peaches, apricots, pomegranates, bananas. Abundant supply of water, each large garden having a fine well reservoir attached to it.

'*March* 28.—Passed the supposed sites of Emmaus and Ajalon, and entered the hill country. Experienced an uneasy longing for the first sight of Jerusalem. Passing on before the rest in the knowledge that that height surmounted, the city of the Great King should burst in view, I was passed by Hammond at full gallop.

'In a few moments the city was before us. We instinctively paused and uncovered our heads before the place where God had so long dwelt in visible manifestation, and where His divine Son had suffered and died. Difficult to analyse the feelings of such a moment.

'Long line of massive-looking wall with the Tower of Hippicus in the centre. The commencement of the valley, with the Mount of Olives. The grey houses of the town. Took up our quarters on Mount Moriah, close to the wall.

'In the evening we adjourned to Mr. Hall's room, an upper chamber, and on this night, the anniversary of that on which Christ was betrayed, we partook of the Holy Communion. Mr. Coombs officiated and broke the bread. We engaged in prayer. The bread before us was the paschal bread, and the wine that of Jerusalem. The delight and strength of this simple and affecting ordinance I never more truly experienced, nor was it ever partaken before in more solemn circumstances. I am thankful that our first entrance into Jerusalem had so solemn an inauguration.

'*March* 29.—Good Friday. Went out by St. Stephen's Gate and had my first distinct view of the Mount of Olives. Something extremely pleasant in the look of this little hill. Deep valley of the Kedron beneath, filled with olive-trees as of old. One can easily understand how to such a scene Christ would often resort with His disciples. We ascended by the road which leads right up to the Church of the Ascension, that which David pursued when he fled from his son Absalom. We descended on the opposite side to Bethany. Saw cistern cut out of the solid rock. Could not see the Dead Sea for the haze.

'In the evening went to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and witnessed the mummery which on this day every year takes place. The spacious building comfortably filled with

pilgrims and sceptics like myself. Visited the Holy Sepulchre beneath the dome. Lit up gorgeously with many coloured lights. Went to a small chapel. A large crucifix played an important part in the ceremonies. The Archbishop of Jerusalem entered, looking as solemn as possible, with his long patriarchal beard. Seating himself he submitted to the operation of dressing—each vestment presented at the altar before it was put on. Lastly a mitre, sparkling with false stones, was put on his head. Altogether he looked well got up and grand, though he sometimes spat on the pavement, unbecoming his then position. A train of fat monks, some tall and some short, arranged in line before the altar, one holding a crucifix. A young monk of gentle manners and fine face ascended the steps of the altar and delivered a sermon in Italian in a silvery voice. Sermon finished, the procession round the sepulchre begins. At various parts the procession paused, and a sermon was preached. I heard five—Italian, English by a young Irish monk, French, Russian, Arabic. Pleased with the spirituality of the sermon in the strong Irish brogue. He told his audience plainly that they were guilty of a crime as great as that of the Jews, in crucifying, as they often did, the Lord of Glory afresh.

'We ascended between a guard of Turkish soldiers the steep flight of steps which leads to the room upstairs called Calvary. How the poor, deluded Greeks believe this is a wonder. The wooden image of Christ was taken from the Cross, carried downstairs in a sheet, and buried in the sepulchre.

'This closed the proceedings, which lasted hours. How sad beyond expression! Tired, and wearied, and sad of heart we returned. A degrading system of idolatry.

'*March* 30.—Easter Sunday. Went to the English Church. Heard a very excellent, earnest sermon from Bishop Gobat on the Resurrection of Christ. We afterwards partook of Communion. The scene, the season, and the circumstances all contributed to give peculiar solemnity to our participation in this ordinance.

'I could not help thinking that the Presbyterian method of administering the ordinance has many advantages over the Episcopalian. In the afternoon went, Bible in hand, to the Mount of Olives, to muse on these sufferings which we had called to remembrance.'

The party journeyed to Jericho and Bethlehem, and then returned to Jerusalem. The journal on 6th April continues :

'With Mr. Barclay on the slope of Olivet. Visited the Tombs of the Prophets and entered these dark caverns.

'*April* 7.—Sabbath. Forenoon worshipped in the English Church. Afternoon in Gethsemane. Sat for two hours beneath ancient olives reading the last discourses of our Lord. Perfectly still, so near the city. Communed in spirit with my congregation at home.'

On the 15th they had their last view of Jerusalem. 'Our party of nine, rested, and well. "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning."' Nazareth and Tiberias were visited, and on 22nd April they went on the Sea of Galilee.

'Took boat in early morning. Rickety old tub (the only one on the lake, which in the days of our Saviour was crowded with small craft), propelled by two lusty rowers, and partly by the aid of a ragged old cotton sail. Intensely clear. Lake looks small, and the distant Hermon, with its streams of snow, looks close at hand. Tiberias, with its dilapidated walls and castle with bastion and tower, shines bright and clean in the morning freshness. With the exception of Tiberias and Magdala not a house now stands on the shore of the beautiful lake. Three hours in the big, lumbering boat reading. Went on shore and examined ruins of what were Chorazin and Bethsaida.

'*May* 1.—Tripoli. In the clear light of the morning the mighty Lebanon stood forth in his glory, every line distinctly drawn. Later clouds began to rest on the summit, which added to its altitude—the snow line melting away up into the heavens, grand in the extreme. Anchored off a placid little town.

'*May* 2.—Anchored off Alexandretta, a few houses on the sea-shore. Green hills broken with many peaks came down to the water's edge—like the mountains of the Rhine, wooded to their summits.

'Off Messina. Went ashore to visit Tarsus. Scraggy horses and most refractory mules. Poor Hall, Dale, and Sandie left behind. Captain would not wait a minute past advertised time.

'*May* 5.—Every day is bringing us nearer home with its comforts and its hard work. Up before six and off in a small boat to visit Rhodes. After passing through the gates went up the street of the Chevaliers, which, though now half in ruins, is decidedly the finest street I have seen in this part of the world. Coasted along the island, thirty miles in length. At 3 P.M. passing between Coos and Halicarnassus, the former looking like a quiet Scottish watering-place. Passed the isle of Patmos, much larger than we supposed. Small rocky islets dot the sea.

'Smyrna. Went ashore. "Pearl of the east." The great emporium of the Orient next to Stamboul, which surpasses it in beauty and situation. Called on George Coull. Learned from him the state of our Mission there. Has been labouring for four years. Outward success, I fear, very small. Yet he is hopeful. Jews wretchedly poor, ignorant, and bigoted.

'To Bridge of Caravans, the supposed birthplace of Homer. Name derived from the vast number of camels which during the fruit season cross this bridge, laden with fruit from the interior; sometimes in a morning as many as two to three thousand. A stiff climb. The view repays a hundredfold the slight fatigue. Paradise! The castle, covering with its ruined walls the entire summit, is of vast extent and unknown origin. Supposed Genoese, probably Roman. Subterranean vaults, the arches of which are still visible. Remains of amphitheatre, on whose arena the aged Polycarp perished.

'*May* 8.—Steaming through the Dardanelles. Europe on our left, Asia on our right. Craft of all sizes. Anchored off Gallipoli, so well known during the Russian war. Evening, neared the Bosphorus. In the distance a rock, like the Bass Rock, standing alone. Rounding a point Stamboul in all its glory revealed itself. Busier than the Clyde. Cast anchor before the beautiful Pera.'

While at Constantinople Mr. Mac Gregor learned that a telegram had arrived for him a week before, to the effect that St. John's congregation in Glasgow had unanimously petitioned the Town Council to present him to the charge of that historic church. None of the remaining time was lost. Diligent sight-seeing, varied by visiting the missions and schools, was the order of the days. He went to see the Sultan on his way to worship in the neighbouring mosque.

'After waiting a short time, and admiring the beauty of the Sultanas, like ourselves waiting for a peep of His Holiness, the Sultan appeared on horseback in blue military costume with fez, not old but pale-faced; evidently worn out. A singularly mournful expression, a dignified look withal becoming a king.

'*May* 10.—In caique to Stamboul. City colossal—like Rome on her seven hills lies before one. Most beautiful of all the blue waters of the Bosphorus. It has no match for beauty in all this beautiful world. A gay and busy scene of butterfly-life. The little stream all the way up absolutely covered with caiques filled with well-dressed Mussulmans of both sexes. Crowds on the banks, lounging, eating, drinking, smoking.

'*May* 11.—Mr. Scott at our hotel. Sent to St. John's Church the following telegram: "Expect to be home May 28th, when I shall give decided answer." Made the round of the city on the best hack I ever bestrode—would not disgrace the stable of a nobleman.

'*May* 15.—Visited Scutari. Saw monument raised by "Queen Victoria and her people" to the memory of the officers and men who died for their country in the war against Russia in 1854-1856.

'*Sunday*, *May* 26.—Trench in Westminster Abbey. Newman Hall in the evening.'

The most memorable of his journeys had now ended. Throughout his life he marked it with a Stone of Remembrance. The scenes through which he had passed remained as a setting to that Gospel whose story became the more living to him since he had trodden as a devout pilgrim the ways passed through by the Saviour of the world. It gave him a firmer grip on the future that lies in the far land of Promise, and 'the light which shone when Hope was born' was brought home to him in clearer radiance.

CHAPTER IV

CHANGES AND CHANCES

1861-1862

'The moon's on the lake, and the mist's on the brae,
And the clan has a name that is nameless by day.'

IN June Mr. Mac Gregor was again at work with all the problems of his public and private life to be settled. Those that concerned his immediate future as a minister were the easiest of solution—'Writing letters all morning, disposing of long arrears of correspondence,' is a not unexpected entry to be found in his diary.

He was a good letter-writer, not stinting either time or literary effort in the task, and though he was always to be found groaning over the letters which had to be answered, he as evidently found delight in those which were the only intercourse possible as between friend and friend. He never had a subject on his mind which interested or absorbed him, that he did not communicate it to the person nearest at hand. 'The maid-servant and the stranger within his gate' had to share the passing annoyance, the glory of nature, or the freaks of its moods. Out the matter must come, with a wealth of description which interested the outsider as keenly as himself. Sometimes the passer-by in the street would wonder what had caused so great an excitement.

His handwriting was eminently characteristic. It could be as firm and yet minute as an inscription made for the purpose of testing a microscope. He could write legibly and fully on the back of a camel, or the top of the Great Pyramid. He could write a formal letter in a hand as bold as it was legible. He could and did scrawl, and dot and

dash, till the Rev. Robert Wallace, later the well-known minister of Greyfriars, wrote to him :

'This day sennight you wrote something and sent it to me. Since receipt thereof I have given good heed to make out its meaning in the usual and understood way of deciphering the characters in which it is written. I have bestowed a good deal of pains and research on the matter, but have not as yet been able exactly to determine what alphabet, ancient or modern, enjoys your patronage. Some of the characters are evidently hieroglyphs, and betray a consanguinity to the figures that adorn the marbles of Nineveh and the Rosetta-stone. Others of them have obviously their origin in the writing used by the early Copts, and also by the late Incas of Peru in their manifestos ; while one or two of them are borrowed from the peculiar cipher which was employed by that colony of Hetrurians who emigrated from Italy under the leadership of the great grandson of Tarquinius Superbus and settled in Borneo, B.C. 453.

'So far, of course, I have been able to make out your meaning, but I regret to say my success has hitherto been partial. I regret it the more on this account that what I have managed to decipher reveals to me a striking antithesis between the lucidity of the phraseology and the tenebrosity of the MS.

'Many of the figures I have not been able even with the help of Worde's Universal Alphabetic Chart to identify with any representatives of thought acknowledged by any known tribe or tongue. I present a few of these arcana in a tabular form, with conjectural interpretations—Bengali, Doric, Sikh, Patagonian, Labradoric, Chinese hyphen.

'These signs I thus try to interpret are not Masonic. Perhaps they are Rosicrucians, private marks invented by Captain Kidd and the Buccaneers : anyhow they savour more of a parentage from Diabolus than from Cadmus—I am inclined to conclude that you are inquiring after your cassock and your umbrella. On the hypothesis that such is a correct view to take of the Cabala with which you have favoured me, I beg to say that the piece of raiment is in my possession, but of the other instrument I know nothing. The article of apparel is of no manner of use to me, being too narrow over the chest and too short in the arms ; other-

wise I might have experienced still greater difficulty than I have done in cluing out the theseus of your meaning from the Labyrinth of your caligraphy.

'In further communicating with me on the subject be careful and particular to transmit the key to any cipher you may make use of.'

This well-deserved castigation produced amendment, and the writing in the voluminous correspondence which was to follow was as clear as the style was easy and spontaneous. The diaries continued at times to be cabalistic, and were to grow and abound in the difficulties involved in the use not only of shorthand, but of the various foreign tongues which he was studying.

His sermons were clearly but closely written, though the habit of interlining and adding, and on rarer occasions of abbreviation, make them somewhat difficult reading to any but the preacher. It was remarkable how fully he wrote out every word, and how little regard he paid to the firmly sewed leaves which lay on the desk before him. One rapid glance seemed to give him the pith of a page, and when he had passed it, it was turned back, and the centre of the paper booklets pressed down with a vehement action; or he would flutter over the leaves: conscious he had interpolated so much, he must leave out pages in the ordered sequence; but the literary finish of the spontaneous interlude was as polished as the words, on which had shone the light of many a long night vigil till it was extinguished by the rising sun.

Whether it was the writing of a letter to the friend of his thoughts, or one to those whose desolation and bereavement were lying heavy on his own heart; whether it was the responsibility of writing the words of a sermon to be preached in the ears of a people to whom he was to be the instrument of proclaiming the Word, which was the appointed means of salvation—the writing took it out of him in no common degree. To have quiet for the work of the study was a determining factor in the scheme of his life.

He had received the offer of St. John's Church, Glasgow, while in Constantinople, and had put off any final decision

till he had returned to Paisley. It was a charge for ever associated with the statecraft of Dr. Chalmers and the system of Poor Law Relief which had been the wonder and enlightenment of the whole of Scotland. His thoughts were turned on Glasgow for other reasons, and great was the difficulty of coming to a decision. Immediately after his return he writes:

'Should have returned final answer refusing St. John's had not Messrs. Murray and Walker and Bailie Wilson again waited on me urging me to defer.

'To satisfy them I put the question to my session, "Would my leaving the High Church seriously injure it in the present circumstances?" Their answer was a unanimous "yes."

'I wrote to the Lord Provost and to the Town Clerk separately that I decline St. John's. I do so from a clear sense of duty, and I do not think that I shall ever have cause to regret it. A renunciation of certain advantages of position and income is naturally of some importance to a young man. It is, however, far more than compensated by the attachment of my congregation and by the sense of having done right.'

The Sunday following his decision he preached three times in his own church: morning on 'Freedom and Truth'; afternoon, 'The Divine Purpose of Sinai'; evening, 'Annual Sermon to Sabbath School Children.' The next entry betrays the sense of interruption which is the hardest cross of his profession—'As usual, bothered with visitors. No fewer than twelve. Average stay of twenty minutes. Four hours.'

Near the end of the year he chronicles a day of seventeen marriages, but they were expected interruptions, and there is more mental calm in the record of such a good day's work.

During the autumn he was preaching at the opening of the United Presbyterian Church in George Street, and helping at the Communion in the same membership at Gourock. It was a somewhat unusual event in the 'sixties, and is another mark of the confidence he inspired, and the liberal

attitude he always maintained towards the dissenting churches.

He gave lectures on his journey in the East not only in his own parish, but going further afield. 'Lecture in the west end on Palestine.' Another day was spent in writing a lecture on 'Hermon,' and in December he says he 'lectured on "Tent Life" for two hours, speaking under a severe cold.'

'*Dec.* 22.—The High Kirk in common with every church in the land commemorated the death of Prince Albert. Preached on the text, "Death hath entered into our Palaces."'

The year ended in his own home:

'My first visit for a year to Spoutwells. Dined at Perth with Mr. Fleming. In Scone by evening. Found all well. Had a pleasant walk over the old scenes with Dugald.

'*Jan.* 1, 1862.—New Year brought in at home. Daniel and Dugald with us. A most beautiful morning. The ridges of the Grampians purpled with the rays of the rising sun.'

Dr. Caird preached in Paisley during January, and Mr. Mac Gregor says he went to hear him: 'A plain Gospel sermon very calmly delivered.' He took a rest with his friend Mr. Burns, now minister of Houston, and had a day's shooting with him. 'I enjoyed it very much, though thoroughly tired out.' He notes he has given up strong tobacco, and taken kindly to Turkish and cigarettes. He certainly took kindly to the latter form of smoking, and made his own cigarettes with extraordinary skill and rapidity. He was a ceaseless smoker for a long period of his life, and was pretty well enthralled by the habit. He then discovered that it injured him, and he attributed a slight hæmorrhage in the throat to the effect of tobacco. He instantly and entirely abandoned the practice. Sports of all kinds amused and excited him. He was a persevering fisherman, and some thrilling reminiscences remain of his hunting performances.

In February he left with Mr. Cameron Lees to pay a

visit in Northumberland. On their way through Edinburgh he saw the Royal Academy, and notes that 'Luther,' and the 'Dowie Dens of Yarrow,' by Noel Paton, were the best pictures in the collection. He passed through Jedburgh and examined the Abbey—'very far surpassed what I expected, could easily be restored. In much better preservation than Paisley Abbey.' Of course he was not content till he had ascended the tower and viewed the landscape o'er. He went to Otterburn, followed the Rede to Rochester, and examined the well-defined Roman Camp; after a rough but pleasant drive by Elsdon and across Coquet river, reaching Alwinton. He describes his experiences in a letter to Miss Robertson:

'EGERTON, *Feb.* 21, 1862.

'Have you ever heard of Carter Fell? I write this within its shadow, and expect in less than an hour to be across the Border and into Northumberland. I am not sure that you are at all aware of the important fact of Lees and myself having deserted our flocks and betaken us to this lonely corner of the British dominions. Lees, poor fellow! in search of health, myself in search of pleasure.

'He is one of the most pleasant travelling companions I ever had, full of fun and frolic, and up to all sorts of mischief.

'You can have no idea of this part of the country. I had no notion that there was such scenery as the Cheviot Hills in our land, with their soft outline gentle as the smile on a woman's face; their rounded form unbroken by crag or tree, and covered even at this season with the richest grass. To-day we visit the celebrated battlefield of Otterburn, no less than three gentlemen—glad to see a human face in this retired region of the world—accompanying us half way on our road to Alnham, near Alnwick.

'Before night we shall have ridden a distance of about forty miles.

'More glorious weather one could not have. The keen, fresh breeze of the hills drives all nonsense out of one's head.

'If I had time I would weary you with a description of what we have done and of what we intend doing. As it is I can only ask how you all are, and what you are about. Very gay, doubtless!

'Have you managed to decipher my German letter? It amounts just to this: "Think well before you commit yourself to that Dresden business. There are some whom we send out of the country for their country's good. There are others whom we can hardly lose even for six months."

'On Feb. 22 went out coursing, a most delightful sport, though not very successful on account of mist. Glorious morning, the birds holding a regular concert.'

The Sunday he spent at Alnham:

'Anxious to take Communion, but I had not previously spoken to the vicar. About twenty communicants. Began to write sermon on "Is thy servant a dog?"'

The next week he was again out, and records splendid day's coursing: 'Six on horseback. Greyhounds killed several hares. Splendid runs. All dined together in the evening. Our friend Lees as usual very bright.'

Sir James Lees has very vivid recollections of this visit to Mr., afterwards Sir Henry Scott, and of his hospitalities in the home and in the field. He says they led an open-air life during their visit. Mr. Scott had large farms, including one at Alnham called Whittingham. He mounted them all for the day's coursing, and the Scotts were much taken by Mac Gregor's enthusiasm for the sport and his fearless riding.

He climbed up on the horse provided for him without a thought, save that it was to carry him afield. One day a hare had been started, and they were having a long and exciting chase after it. The hare got on to a dike, and running along its length turned sharp in at a gap, on the other side of which lay much broken ground, covered by a tangle of undergrowth, leading into a thick copse. The other riders saw the difficulties of the place, and prudently rode round to the other side of the wood. Not so Mac Gregor. His blood was up, and he was not to be stayed by stock or stone. He put his horse at the gap, rode headlong through ditch and wood, and when his more sober companions reached him, he was found on the other side, his horse with heaving flanks, his own face torn by the

briers, and trickling with blood. In his hand he held aloft the dead hare, with the dogs crowded round him, and he himself making the welkin ring with the 'vengeful halloo.'

The cateran spirit of his wild clan was with him. It was easy to picture him leading a moonlit foray from the remote glens, and to follow him as he drove home the head of cattle won by the raiders. A true son of that clan for whom the words were written:

> 'Doom'd and devoted by vassal and lord,
> Mac Gregor has still both his heart and his sword!
> If they rob us of name, and pursue us with beagles,
> Give their roofs to the flame, and their flesh to the eagles!
>
> While there's leaves in the forest, and foam on the river,
> Mac Gregor, despite them, shall flourish for ever!
>
> Through the depths of Loch Katrine the steed shall career,
> O'er the peak of Ben Lomond the galley shall steer,
> And the rocks of Craig Royston like icicles melt,
> Ere our wrongs be forgot, or our vengeance unfelt!'

Sir Walter Scott, who wrote the lines descriptive of the landless Mac Gregors, felt the stirring of the same passions as he charged with the yeomen along the Musselburgh sands, and with drawn sword was heard to mutter, 'Cut them down, cut them down, the rascals!' Glimpses here and there of the primitive man emerge, and give an interest to the type as it is bound and fettered by the development of civilisation.

In some phases this Celt appears in the light of mediæval Scotland. It is possible to watch his career, and deplore that he did not live in times which would have given scope to his warlike and predatory powers. Or, it is equally possible to rejoice that those fiery instincts and untrammelled enthusiasms had been brought into subjection. A higher cause claimed his unquenchable zeal, and he was to serve his name and race, not with sword and target, but as the herald of peace and good-will.

No doubt during this interval his mind, if not lightly, was turning on thoughts of love, and his feet strayed often in the direction of Mrs. Hutchison's house, or yet further to that of the Robertsons in Glasgow. Without any binding words he believed that he had plainly indicated to Helen

Robertson, before starting for the East, that he looked on her in the light of a friend who must for the future occupy the centre of his thoughts.

Helen Robertson, by all accounts, must have had a singular and refined type of beauty, and she was possessed of a brightness of spirit and a temperament of that vivacity which is so often associated with the fell disease against which she fought so resolutely, and from whose ravages she was to die at an early age.

Soon after her fifteenth year she had shown weakness in her lung, and at the age when Mr. Mac Gregor first knew her it had become a distinct affection, with grave symptoms. He marked her condition with eyes which were sharpened by that knowledge which makes a minister sometimes better able to diagnose a disease than the ablest physician of the body. He saw and understood. His eyes were opened by his intense and growing affection. Looking back on this period he would say that what he did was done with his eyes open.

Ever hopeful and trustful, he believed that the Great Healer might restore health, and his sanguine temperament gradually convinced him that his care and tendance might be the means used to give back the blessing of health to the young girl, who in the morning of her life was so full of all that was attractive and beautiful. Mingled with the desire to make her one with himself was this conviction that under his fostering care she might yet become whole and strong. As he became possessed with this great hope, so the city with its fetid air, its ceaseless clamour, and its insistent claims began to fever his nerves, already strung to breaking pitch by the conflict within himself. The weary routine fretted him, the interruptions became unbearable, and he fled more than ever to his hiding-places. Jaded and restless he returned from the wearisome round of funerals and banquets and the attendance in the haunts of disease and death and poverty which were under his pastoral care.

Probably he let fall some word of longing, of his wish to be near the heart of the Nature he loved so well; words of

desire, which were floated far afield by the fanning wing of rumour. If so, his words did not return to him void.

In March he received a letter from Mr. J. Leslie Melville Cartwright, whose wife, Lady Elizabeth, was the patron of the parish of Monimail in Fife.

'PARK LANE, *March* 26, 1862.

'DEAR SIR,—Having been informed that you are disposed to take a country parish, I have the pleasure to inform you that Lady Elizabeth has decided to offer you the parish of Monimail now vacant, and we shall think ourselves most fortunate if you accept the charge, having received such high recommendations in your favour from Mrs. Campbell of Blythswood, the Rev. George Burns of Houston, and others.

'As it may assist you in coming to a decision, I will mention to you now what I know of the stipend. It is what is called 17 chalders, I think, and averaged for the years 1857 to 1860 inclusive about £300, including £8, 8s. 1½d. communion money. There is a very good manse and garden, also some glebe land and cottages belonging to it. The former is let without the cottage at £20.

'We shall be leaving London on Tuesday next, and shall be much obliged if you could conveniently send us an answer before that day, or even sooner if possible.'

When Mr. Mac Gregor received this somewhat autocratic letter, he went at once to talk it over with his friends 'Burns and Lees.' On the 29th he wrote to Mr. Cartwright, stating difficulty in accepting, and asked time for his decision. In his diary he says, 'Great difficulty in deciding. Personally no wish to leave Paisley. *Domine da Lucem.*'

He decided to put the question in the hands of another, and when he received an answer to his letter, he had no difficulty in making a rapid and final decision.

'PAISLEY, *March* 28, 1862.

'MY DEAR HELEN,—I have got the offer of Monimail. Seriously, I wish your advice as a friend—should I take it? The living is not so good as I was led to expect. Taking glebe and manse it will be £350, which is equivalent to £400 in the town. The country is beautiful. The manse

is within a few minutes' walk of Melville House. Altogether for a quiet country living nothing could be better. And yet I feel very loath to leave this old hole of Paisley. A single word from you, saying what you think I should do, I shall esteem a very great favour.'

Miss Robertson's answer must have been prompt, and no one hated indeterminate action more than did her correspondent. On the 29th he wrote to Mr. Cartwright:

'DEAR SIR,—You will have heard by telegram to-night that I accept the offer of the living of Monimail, which Lady Elizabeth Cartwright has been pleased to make me. Among other reasons I have been induced to do so partly from her ladyship's kindness, partly from the nature of the parish, to which I paid a hasty visit to-day, and because I understand that the living is ripe for augmentation. You will excuse my saying that the greatest drawback is the manse, which is not only a most inconvenient house, but in a state of great disrepair. It is to be hoped that the heritors will avail themselves of the opportunity still afforded by the vacancy, and effect the necessary alterations and repairs. I do sincerely trust that the call will be harmonious, and that my settlement shall conduce to the best interests of the parish.

'Accustomed for seven years to hard and unintermitting parochial work, I hope that I shall soon fall in with country ways; and if assiduity and zeal in the discharge of pastoral duty can still further recommend me to her ladyship and yourself, I trust she will never have any cause to regret her appointment.'

The manse, which Mr. Cartwright had on imperfect knowledge called 'good,' was so bad that, after the heritors had agreed to make extensive alterations and repairs, Mr. Mac Gregor wrote to his agent in the matter, saying:

'I think you and I are agreed that if the old affair were accidentally and comfortably burned, and a new manse built farther up the glebe according to the improved architecture of modern days, it would be a blessing to the incumbent and his successors for the next three generations, an ornament to the parish, a credit to the family of Melville, and eventually not a loss but a positive gain to the heritors of Monimail. But as Mr. Milne in language which, for cool

caution, I defy you as a lawyer to match, reports the manse as "generally in a state of *tolerable* repair," I presume the wisest thing we can do is to make the best of it.'

Making the best of it took so long that the minister was not installed till half the period of his incumbency was over, and the fact that the manse had been practically rebuilt for him was among the grievances when he again returned to a city charge.

The presentation in favour of the Rev. James Mac Gregor to the church and parish of Monimail is dated the 4th April 1862.

Paisley was not going to part with the minister of the High Church without much woe and lamentation and even some indignation, and one method of showing their disappointment was not very worthy of themselves or the church to which they belonged. There was much searching of heart as to the reasons which could have induced this man of their choice to desert the High Kirk and the town. Had they not filled the building from the floor to the gallery? Had they not boasted of him as their very own, and had not his flock been 'dutiful,' and showed their confidence in his fidelity by sparing him no toil or trouble which could aid them in their affairs temporal and spiritual? Tossing like a foam-flake on the waste of letters of business, regret, and reproach, lies a small piece of note-paper with no signature to lessen the weight of the few tender words:

'DEAR PASTOR,—Can no pleading prevail on you to stay among us? It will be such a grief to part with you. You do not know the silent good you are doing among us.'

Eight hundred communicants sat down at the last Communion he held with them as their minister, and ninety were newly admitted.

In May he went to Monimail:

'Mr. and Lady Elizabeth Cartwright drove me to Melville; very kind. First impressions of my patrons most favourable. Got best bedroom. Old, wainscotted from floor to ceiling.

'Preached trial sermon very comfortably. Mr. and Lady Elizabeth Cartwright both present.

'Fine avenue of beeches silvered in light, and groups of cattle lounging on the green sward.'

From Melville he writes to Miss Robertson:

'I have got over what the Church very wisely calls part of my "trials," and you will be glad to hear that I was not in any way put about by the presence of all the judges of Monimail. There was a larger attendance, one of the old elders said, than has been seen in the church for many years. How they were satisfied with the appearance (not personally, but ministerially) I cannot say. I understand, however, that they are generally pleased with Lady Elizabeth's selection.

'I have been sitting at the window of my bedroom after my work, and after a long walk through the grounds with Mr. Cartwright and her ladyship—sitting drinking in the beauties of one of the heavenliest afternoons I ever remember. Right before me lies a noble avenue of old beeches, their giant arms stretching far out over a park of richest green, dotted here and there with lazy cattle that seem to know it to be Sunday, the mellow sunlight streaming in floods of gold upon park and trees and flower-garden, and here and there vistas opening out and giving you glimpses of the far-off hills. Actually as I look the fresh spring leaves are not green but golden. How could I sit drinking in all this rare beauty from God's beautiful world without having in my mind another of his fair handiworks, pure and calm and peaceful and soul-raising as that scene on which I gaze? You see the train of thought or rather of quiet meditation which has led me to take up my pen and write these hasty lines.

'You can have no idea what a beautiful country this is. I was struck with it before, but now that everything is in the freshness of its bloom it perfectly charms me.

'The patroness has been kindness itself. She is a tall, handsome, aristocratic-looking lady somewhat above thirty years of age, with light hair and blue eyes, possessed of a very pleasant and stately husband and three pretty children. You see how minute I am. I think I might very nearly tell you the colour of the dress she wore yesterday at dinner, but as this is Sabbath I must refrain.'

He returned to Paisley, taking Scone by the way.

'Spent the evening very pleasantly with my family. Found all well, though not pleased at the thought of my leaving Paisley. Running about Scone enjoying myself.'

Mr. Mac Gregor was a member of the General Assembly this year, and from the Regent Hotel, Edinburgh, he writes to Mrs. Barclay:

'As the hard work of the Assembly is now pretty much over, I have leisure to write you giving you the pleasing intelligence (very flattering to our own vanity) that the representatives of the Paisley Presbytery have done their duty, both in sitting and speaking, most faithfully. I believe we are the only three young men who have opened their lips this year. It is very tiresome, wearing work, sitting as I have done from eleven in the morning till one next morning, with an hour and a half for dinner.

'An air of solemnity pervades this Assembly which I have not seen before. The Dunlop case comes on for final settlement this afternoon.

'Yesterday afternoon I took tea with Lady Belhaven, and was introduced by her ladyship to some of the big-wigs, the Lord Justice Clerk, Countess of Rothes, etc. etc.

'Mr. Lees, who has been astonishing the house with his eloquence, leaves to-night. He spoke uncommonly well last night in the debate on Lord Aberdeen's Act.'

On 25th May Mr. Mac Gregor preached his second trial sermon in Monimail. As before he stayed at Melville, receiving that which he ever needed from his friends, kindly sympathy and the comfort of true hospitality. The record in his diary is short—'Church crowded. A mighty contrast to High Kirk, Paisley.'

A contrast indeed! Perhaps no two more widely differing congregations could be found than the ploughmen and hinds of Fife, and the shrewd, commercial 'buddies' of Paisley. The hard, thrifty business men, the weavers and the mill-girls, that he had for seven years looked down upon from the pulpit, and Sunday by Sunday met the crowd of upturned faces packed tightly together, waiting to hear the words poured out from a heart on fire, which bade them

remember that man lives not by bread alone, and that the whirl of machinery and the hammers of commerce are not the only sounds to which mortal ears must be attuned.

And now 'the mighty contrast.' The Sabbath peace is over 'sweet Monimail.' Sunlight falls in a clear radiance, 'and domes the red-plow'd hills with loving blue.' Through the open door the preacher sees the light flickering through the vivid green of the early beech leaves. His eyes are no longer straining through the reek of the dirt-laden air, but he is seeing the face of nature, which was always to him the perennial fountain of refreshment, the inspiration of his closest communings with the heart of the Eternal.

Below him in the 'crowded' church were the country people and villagers to whom he had come to minister. As full of apprehension, as acute in comprehension, and as critical, cautious, and 'slow of heart' as any set of Scots 'furth of the Forth.'

What was the mighty contrast in the mind of the new pastor as he looked down on the family pew of the big house and his eyes rested on the farm seats, where sat the congregation armed with clean handkerchiefs, sprigs of thyme, and a supply of peppermints, ever ready to test and taste the measure of their new minister's gifts?

Mr. Mac Gregor kept his birthday anniversary:

'To-day I have seen thirty years. Oh! if I had them to live over again, what a different use I would make of them. Every year God may be pleased to give me, may He grant me grace to make it better and more useful than the last.'

In August he ended his charge in the High Kirk:

'Preached my last sermon as minister. In the forenoon, "Almost thou persuadest me." In the afternoon, "Finally, Brethren, Farewell." Church crowded long before the time. Nearly seven happy years come and gone. Oh! that I could say when I give in my last account, "Thank God my ministry not altogether fruitless."

'*August* 6.—Bade Paisley farewell. Reached Collessie in time for dinner. The strong and dear tie that binds me to my Paisley people is ended. May God bless me in my new

charge as He did in my last, and may He forgive me if I have done wrong.'

Not often is there any note of doubt in the diaries. Once he had made up his mind he had always a firm conviction that the place he was in was the one he was intended to fill, and therefore the best. He had the power also of believing that the people around him were the best in the world, and his own lot the happiest of any living mortal. Any shadow of unbelief in the faith or purpose of himself or others was painful to him, and he always felt a fresh astonishment if his trust was betrayed, or his confidence in himself or others was shaken. It was a discipline through which he was about to pass, and he protested vehemently, though he finally accepted the dispensation with a resignation born of that strong courage which never forsook him in the darkest hour of his life.

The manse of Monimail was in the hands of the builders, and was not soon to emerge from those retentive workers. Mr. Mac Gregor's friend, Mr. Landale, offered him a house at Lindifferon, and he proceeded to take up his abode there. At once the minister began to realise the experiences of country life—'Furniture arrived, taken from the trucks in a perfect deluge of rain. Things too wet for me to take up my abode at Lindifferon.' Two days later he says, 'Things are getting into shape.' He writes to Miss Robertson more fully of his experiences:

'There are ten hundred things which I could tell you if I thought they would in any way interest you. For instance, the *beauty* of this country in which I now sojourn. One of the most beautiful countries under heaven. I do not exaggerate when I say that I have rarely seen in all my wanderings more truly sylvan beauty than adorns my new parish. Fertile, undulating, in some parts hilly, in all richly wooded and thickly studded with the mansions of the proprietors of the soil. I little wonder that when word first came of its approaching vacancy there were nearly one hundred applications to Lord Leven for the living.

'I am satisfied of this, that if I am not happy, comfortable, and useful here, the fault will be all my own. For one

thing, I find I shall have plenty to do. Yesterday I had a walk of ten miles to see a sick person. Isn't that work, and healthful work, too? Then for my dwelling to be—Lindifferon. Isn't the name pretty? The place is prettier still—three miles from the manse. The distance is the only drawback. Think of it—*Scene*, Lindifferon; *Time*, 3rd Sab. of January. Roads blocked with snow for last six weeks. Rumours floating through the murky air of two carts and four men having gone amissing. One traveller arrived at Lindifferon with his nose frost-bitten. Authentic. A reverend gentleman seen standing at his window with his razor in his hand at nine o'clock in the morning—has three miles to walk to church through drifted snow—shivers miserably. The wind, sharp and gusty, blows the thin, powdered, white dust into eddies and maelstroms—shivers again. Tries the edge of his razor; thinks it is sharp; looks out on the bleak prospect, and then looks at his watch and finds it is half-past nine: one half-hour spent in meditative shivering—shivers again. Looks at the edge of his razor; feels it; thinks it is sharp; breathes on it to make it sharper; clutches it with desperate effort; turns the whites of his eyes upwards, and with a last piteous look at the pure white earth, and a sigh at the thought of what he is to do, proceeds to cut his—beard.

'Such a time as I have had unpacking. The furniture arrived on Tuesday, every article sewed up in canvas with infinite pains, and I have no doubt at infinite cost. Chairs not worth their weight had their legs carefully swathed in hay, their spines supported by bars and ropes, and their bodies muffled in packsheet. Every article was dressed and packed as if for a journey of ten thousand miles, and yet, with all this care, when the carts went to bring the affairs away it poured like a deluge; and the blockheads in charge had not the sense to put a tarpaulin over them to keep them dry.

'After two days' hard work things are beginning to assume shape, order emerging out of chaos, and comfort out of misery.

'It is not at all improbable that I shall be at Lindifferon for the next six months, so that there will be abundance of time to put the manse into thorough order. I am not at all sorry for this, as my new dwelling is not only most commodious and comfortable, with every possible convenience,

but is also centrally and beautifully situated. The road to it from the church is one of the prettiest I have ever walked; fine woods on either side; Fernie Castle close on the right; Cunnoquhie House on the left, and Rankeillour a little farther on.

'With a single service in a small church, I do not think that I shall feel its worst drawback too much, even in the depth of winter, despite the doleful scene on a previous page, because Lindifferon is in the very centre of the parish.

'Then as for society, I find that I can have as much of it as is good for me, or for anybody else who has a soul to care for, and work to do in this world for God before leaving it.'

Mr. Williamson gave him shelter at the manse of Collessie, where he gratefully notes he received much kindness.

Before he had been a month in his new charge he preached to a large audience in the open air at Ladybank, and he had the embarrassment of being offered the living of Montrose.

The Provost, with a deputation, called upon him:

'In difficulties about it; did not see them. Rode in the evening to see children feeding on gooseberries at the manse. Had a very bad fall from Mr. Landale's horse. Thank God it did not injure me.

'Visited in the lower part of Letham. Found people kind, clean, and obliging. An unusually large proportion of great age. Is this owing to the climate? Partly, and partly to the kindness of the proprietors providing for them.

'Visited from eleven till five o'clock. Houses of the farm-servants are of a very superior kind. The proprietors have evidently exercised power to elevate the physical and moral tone of their labourers.

'Ascended to the monument. The rich plain of Fife like a vast garden at our feet. Arthur's Seat, Schiehallion, Ben Lawers, etc., all distinctly visible.

'Very much satisfied with my first week's work as a country minister.'

A week after this happy minute there arose on the horizon the first of the clouds which were to darken so much of the sunshine of his life.

In taking the parish of Monimail he had allowed the thought of his future to influence his choice. He hoped to make Helen Robertson his wife, and he believed her health would benefit from living in the country. He knew she was fond of all those social festivities which belong to a town life, and he was convinced that hot rooms, dances, combined with exposure to the night air, were not the treatment on which she would grow strong and throw off the affection of her lung.

The intimacy with Helen had grown apace. His wishes were not unknown to her, but she had not been able to make up her mind, and he thought it would be better not to press for what he had time and again decided was not a thing he could hope to attain. While both were in this indeterminate condition, Mr. Mac Gregor overheard in a conversation at a dinner-table a discussion on the climate of the east coast. It was asserted by a medical man who was present, on his own and on the authority of another, 'that this place is bad for chest complaints, and very uncongenial to consumptive patients.' He notes:

'I like this place and parish better than I expected, but Dr. —— told his friend not to come if there was anything wrong with his chest. Oh! that I had known this!'

We must recall the date of these misgivings. Medical science was still advising that patients of a consumptive tendency should have no air rather than cold air; and Mr. Mac Gregor, through the whole of his life, was a prey to the conviction that 'night air' was peculiarly insalubrious to the healthy as well as to the delicate.

In this time of doubt and perplexity he wrote constant memoranda of his troubles.

'*Aug.* 29, 1862.—The close of my third week at Monimail. Everything has gone pleasantly. The people very kind, and Mr. Landale especially so. I find the days run away even faster than they did in Paisley. I again heard of the unhappy effects of this climate on people with weak chests. I took the parish because I believed it was peculiarly healthy, and therefore peculiarly well-adapted to Helen. It

is much to be feared that the well-being of an individual was more consulted than the thought of my people, or the glory of God. Have I sinned? If so, I have met my punishment this night, when I have learnt that the climate of this place is injurious. After all my well-laid schemes they may prove abortive. I cannot ask her to come here knowing the climate is not suited to her health. Weak and consumptive she is already. What if bringing her here might kill her?

'Possibly why this climate is called bad, is that people do not use the proper precautions. Old people appear more numerous than in any place I know.

'Here, for my own future use years hence, if God spare me, I record the fact that I have always prospered when I acted with a single eye to God's glory, and left all personal considerations out of view, and I have always failed when self has in the least degree biassed my movements and arrangements.'

These were painful days, and he turned resolutely to his work, and to the companionship of his neighbours and friends.

He held his first Communion Service at Monimail, and asks that as long as it pleases God to keep him there he may be 'faithful.'

His studies included French, and for relaxation he occasionally went out shooting: 'Killed three hares and missed two. Intensely hot, but enjoyed the glorious day and scenery. More beautiful views I never looked upon.'

In October he was once more back in the High Church. 'Served four tables. Never preached to my dear old people with more comfort.' He had determined to put an end to the state of indecision in which both he and Helen Robertson had been for some time. For this purpose he went down to see the family where they were residing at Kilcreggan.

'Though I have not formally asked Helen I regard myself as bound to her. With God's help I will settle matters definitely to-morrow. I have made this a matter of much prayer.'

'*Oct.* 12.—She gave her consent. Thus is terminated, at

least for the present, a season of much anxiety. The gracious God to whom I return my most humble thanks prosper our union, and crown my dear wife with blessing.'

He left Kilcreggan next day, and at once began letters which are the best record of the following two years.

'*October* 14, 1862.

'I had a hundred things to say to you before leaving, but there was little time and less opportunity. The deepest gratitude of my heart is due to you. God bless and reward you for your generous conduct in returning the love I have borne towards you for years. He who has guided me all my life long, in giving me you has given me the highest blessing I can hope or wish to have, next to His own favour, this side the grave.

'I am not insensible to the sacrifice you have made. Young and beautiful as you are, admired by all who know you for your goodness of heart as well as grace of person, you might have refused to look on me with favour. God knows I am not insensible to my personal defects. They caused me a bitter youth. Nothing but the experience of life has taught me what your good sense has taught you, that personal defects will not prevent a man being beloved if God has given him, in some measure, qualities of mind and heart to compensate for an ungainly exterior. While I can never forget what I am, I have learnt to estimate my defects of person more lightly, and your love will lead me to forget them more than I have yet done. After mature consideration you have given me your love, and I believe you will never have cause to regret it. The happiness of married life can never be affected by such a trivial cause as that to which I have thus plainly alluded. If God spares us to be joined together, the devoted attachment of a life will best show my gratitude. May God bless, strengthen, and shield you!'

He returned to his parish more at peace with himself and the world than he had been since the image of Helen Robertson had first met his eyes, enthralling his hopes, and making the future full of alternate cloud and sunshine. Both of them had had their troubles, and while for Helen the past held a memory and a hope which she had early

lost, her lover had the chill fear always at his heart that he had fixed his hopes and affections on a life which he knew could not be a long one. Very soberly had they come together, and the strength which comes from a united and understanding love was to be put to the severest tests.

On paper he poured out all that he said, or would have said, had conversation been possible. To his surprise he often finds he has covered twenty pages before he thought he had written ten. In one letter he states his views as to what letters should be, and he was able to write up to his ideal, for letters more instinct with the individual were surely never penned. They are outpourings of facts and thoughts, storms and calms, and over all there is a rich sense of humour and the desire to make the best of everything.

'Letter-writing is generally deemed a bore. Why, I cannot imagine. Letter-writing is just chatting on paper; and how those who are such admirable adepts at chatting with the tongue won't be at the bother to chat equally well with the pen, it would be difficult to divine. When one has a spare hour, to me at least, there are few things more delightful than just to write helter-skelter on, to one for whom I care, not knowing what is to come next and not caring how long or how short, how wise or how foolish the letter may be. For one thing, it brings more vividly to the mind the object written to, whoever he or she may be. He or she (as you do at this moment) stands out clear, well-defined, sharp as a bas-relief to the eye of the soul.

'Has it ever occurred to you as one strong motive to a good and pure and useful life, that we enter the world of spirits, where more things will occur than we in this imperfect state ever dream of, with the very character which we acquire in the world of sense? If we are selfish, cold, and unloving here, we shall be the very same there. Not an attribute of character can death change. It has no power over the immaterial mind, only over the perishable body does its sway extend. When the spirit bursts free and happy into the blaze of eternal day, it will be the very spirit which breathes within us now; the same feelings, longings, loves, desires, only, in the case of the Christlike, purified at last from all taint of sin.

'The longer I live the more profoundly do I feel that a genuine religion based on simple faith in Christ and love to Christ is the happiest thing in the world, the only solace for an aching heart. In that humble faith I, for one, desire to live and die.'

'LINDIFFERON HOUSE, *Oct.* 1862.

'I told you that you should have letters often from me, almost every day.

'It is a pleasure for me to write them, as I hope it is for you to receive them. A greater pleasure to have one from you. As you have even less to do than I have, and as epistolary correspondence is a capital exercise, I hope to have them nearly as often if not as long as mine. No circumstance can be trivial in the eyes of those who have a regard for each other. The smallest piece of information is gratefully received. What in the least degree interests the one must always interest the other.

'I thought of you yesterday at the Communion, engaged in one of the most solemn acts we are called on to discharge in this world. When down at Kilcreggan on the Saturday, I thought I should like so much to take the Communion in your church, side by side with you. It would have been a solemn ratification of a most solemn vow. At these seasons with God's greatest gift before me I try to remember all the goodness He has shown me, and to pour out my soul in gratitude for His undeserved mercies. I have no hesitation in saying that there never was a human being to whom God has been more merciful than He has been to me. He has given me a thousand blessings which the world knows nothing of, and which I have never deserved.

'To crown all His temporal gifts He has given me you. If ever I thanked God sincerely it was that day at Kilcreggan in my own quiet room; and if ever I prayed for grace to guide both you and me, it was surely then.

'Had I at one time anticipated the relation in which we now stand to each other, I would have been more frugal and careful, and been in a position to ask you here to-morrow. Knowing how you stand in Glasgow, I should have asked you to come here at once even to Lindifferon, and save yourself the well-meant but absurd condolements of your friends. I am almost inclined to do that as it is. But Prudence says, "Wait a little, there is no hurry for awhile." We must

begin life at least comfortably, and it takes a time to remove from one place to another and get matters rightly settled and in order.

'As it is, I think of getting my sister through to keep house for me during the winter. There is no power of management in me, I find, and servants can do what they like with me. Even my present domestic, whom I think a paragon, I was told last night not to *trust*. God bless me, I have trusted her already! She may have made away with half my goods and chattels for aught I know, though I don't believe it. My plan is to trust, and I suspect I must do so to the end. Things will never be right with me till you come. I want just one thing, you to adorn the kirk, the manse, and the parish. If I had my will of it you should be here to-morrow. *Fiat voluntas Dei.*

'I wish you would send me your photograph at your earliest convenience. I beg to enclose one of mine with belt and pistol all complete, which you may safely put in your album, inasmuch as no human being can tell who it is. Mine is signed in Hebrew, "Jacob, the Son of Gregor," and the inscription on the back is this: "To Helen Robertson, this likeness is given. J. Mac Gregor." "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee. The Lord make His face shine on thee, and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."

'It is the old blessing which God commanded Aaron and the priests to pronounce upon the people. That it may rest largely and liberally on thee, my dearest Helen, is the earnest prayer of your best friend, JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

'*Oct.* 1862.

'I am delighted to hear that the ring has pleased you so much. There is a world of poetry about that one word, ring. I think one might write a book upon it. For instance let the imagination dwell just for a minute on the mass of misery and the mass of joy which have fallen upon the human family either through or in connection with rings. Think how many millions of young hearts have plighted their troth over rings, how many millions of lives have been wedded together for better, for worse, for weel or for woe, and their union symbolised by rings; how many thousands have prayed God that a wedding-ring had never circled their finger; how many millions have thanked God that it did.

HELEN ROBERTSON, 1861

JAMES MACGREGOR, 1861.

Rings! rings! I wonder some great poet has not in monumental verse sung the praise of rings. Long may your dainty finger bear the ring I sent you; and long may it be to you a pledge of affection more genuine, more lasting than purest gold.

'What splendid weather! I think I never remember in this country a more lovely day than yesterday. An atmosphere clear and bracing, a sky of the deepest blue unpolluted with a single cloud, hills and forests and yellow stubble-fields bathed in a sea of sunshine; the glad heart of nature making your own leap for joy.

'You seem to have been pretty largely supplied with sermons during the Communion Season. Perhaps you had too many of them. There is one absolute essential to successful preaching and to beneficial hearing, firm faith that it is God's own appointed plan for the conversion of souls, and that He never will withhold the blessing when it is earnestly sought. The moment you allow the mind to fix itself solely and exclusively on the human element in preaching, the man, the talent, the oratory, you miss the good of preaching. The way to regard it is this: to look upon the man as but the machine in God's hand, doing God's work. Then you reap the benefit; because you listen reverently, patiently, receptively. This is far too little enforced and far too little understood.

'I began in a great hurry to write a single page, and here I am at my thirteenth!'

The next letter dealt with a matter which vexed his spirit in no common degree. It was the first chill breath he was to feel as to the worth of popular favour, and possibly it was for him a salutary lesson, taught through the ungenerous conduct of some in his former charge. For seven years he had been fêted and petted, and his gifts were the boast of his congregation. Everything that could stimulate what he had called 'an honourable pride' had been at his feet. So long as he remained the possession of the High Kirk, nothing was too good for him. The supplement to his stipend had been cheerfully raised and paid, and tokens of appreciation had been showered on him.

It seemed to him good to part with his charge, and the attitude of the people changed. Mr. Mac Gregor was not

indifferent to the value of money. No Celt is. He was not a good manager of this world's gear, but he knew its worth, and he had a strong sense that the labourer was not only worthy of his hire, but that the hire should be worthy of the labourer. When he left Paisley, a certain proportion of the augmentation of his stipend was due. It was not a large sum, and probably most of those who objected to its being paid could have settled the matter out of their own bank account and never missed the amount. They chose to haggle as to what should be paid, and he was surprised and indignant at this display of pitiful penuriousness.

As he writes to Helen he gives an almost amusing picture of startled surprise, apparently meeting for the first time one of the best known traits in frail human nature. It was true in his case 'that the jingling of the guinea helps the smart that honour feels,' and his words do not lack point or vehemence :

'I had a note to-day from Paisley. I learnt from it I have as yet no successor, learning also that there is some difficulty, in the meantime, about their giving me my just and lawful dues in the shape of eighty pounds hard cash. A somewhat important matter to a poor devil like myself in the midst of my changes to and fro.

'The loss of it won't ruin me, but it will embitter me. I have no hesitation in saying to you that I have done far more for the High Kirk than it has done for me. I slaved for it, I nearly killed myself for it ; I refused over and over again tempting offers for it ; I made it. That is the short and long of the story. They know that, and yet out of a pitiful spite some of them mean to do me a harm. If they do, other ears shall hear of it. Faugh ! it poisons one to think of such drivelling meanness for a moment. Excuse me alluding to it.

'My manse is going on and turning out better than I expected. The masons tell me it is the strongest, dryest house they ever had anything to do with. The walls are enormously thick, and in the parts torn down, even after this whole summer's rain and the house without a fire, I saw the lime dry as tinder.'

He wrote what he intended 'other ears' to hear, and had it been placed among the archives of the kirk session it must have caused a conflagration among the mouldiest of papers; but though he wrote his mind, it was never sent. He had learnt a lesson from the matter, and he writes that

'Popularity is not worth a straw. The three things a man in this world should mind are God, his duty, and himself.'

He could never keep his anger long, and even as it found expression it would burn itself out. Beyond this, his affectionate nature could not bear to be at dispeace even with friends who had betrayed the confidence he had had in them. Writing on friendship, he says:

'Between friends let there never be one angry word, one harsh thought. We never can blot out the past. If there has been poison in it we may cure the effects of the poison, but we can never efface the scar. What to me is a mortal terror, is the being angry with a friend.'

Helen Robertson had fits of depression very incidental to the attacks of weakness from which she suffered. It was always a condition Mac Gregor felt should be met and combated, and he writes his views fully to her:

'1862.

'Fits of despondency, dark views of life, morbid thoughts, whatever be their origin, whether mental or physical, are injurious to health and therefore *bad*; for God wishes His creatures to be happy and not miserable. He is more pleased with the smile and the laugh than with the sigh and the tear. He sends real sorrows to us when we need them, and it is wrong of us to give way to *fictitious* ones. I believe that three-fourths of the misery of life is of our own making, and may with God's grace and help be mended, also that mental dejection—spiritual sorrow—is far worse to bear than the coarser cares and common ills of life. In every instance they arise from one or other or both of two causes: from a sense of sin, or the result of physical depression and nervousness. In the former case there is one and only one unfailing remedy—union to Christ by a living faith, simple acceptance of Him as our Redeemer,

our Brother, our never-failing Friend. In the latter case the best remedy is bodily exercise, mental employment, plenty to do.

'God designed us all to do work in the world—good, wholesome, useful work, and in doing that to find true happiness. Life in all its relations is an awfully real, earnest, solemn thing. Brooding over things, letting the mind have its own way, can do no good. We should parcel out our day and let every portion have its appointed work. Let that work be done and done well. A girl should give a certain portion of her day to household work, a certain portion to study, a certain portion to religious exercises, a certain portion to bodily exercise and to works of benevolence. I find great benefit from having the routine of my work broken in upon by some regular study, such as French, etc. Two things have always done me good: casting myself and my care upon God, and rushing from my thoughts into work.

'There can be no really good life which is not, more or less, a sad one. Sadness is the heritage of all thoughtful minds, of all earnest souls. Be it yours to extract whatever of strength and goodness can be found in your times of sorrow and gloom.

'I believe that we do wrong when we do not abstract from all the events of this life, and more especially from illness, the divine meaning that is in it. I believe that every pain of body that we feel is designed to make us humble and mindful of death, to draw us nearer God, and to give us a firmer hold of Christ and Christ's heaven.'

In the meantime settling into his house at Lindifferon went on apace, and the minister describes his new-born experiences as a householder, and his rapid determination to put his mundane affairs into hands more competent than his own:

'My servant has come, and I think will do (I have got the cows and hens, etc. etc., transferred to another): a pale-faced, simple-looking, kindly sort of being, about thirty-four, with not much life or activity, slow but sure, honest and good from her looks—you see how I trust—and was in her last place nine years; likes to serve a single gentleman; knew me, I understand, when I was at college—not much

to my credit; a manageable, obliging person; speaks in a soft, slow tone, and addresses you almost familiarly, at least as if deeply interested in you. Hair, let me see, light; eyes, blue and sparkling; figure or gait, shambling; height, 5 feet 6 inches. Clothes hang loosely on her, as if thrown on, or put on with a pitchfork; lacking in facility to button, or pin, or whatever you call it, her dress behind, as I distinctly saw her "stays" to-night after prayers; not nearly so good a cook as the last, who made no pretensions; above all has not, and never will have, the power to boil a potato, and keeps the potatoes on the lobby-table till they are a little cold; and, lastly, will not be the very cleanliest of domestics, if I may judge from her dress.

'Such is a rough outline of my domestic. If not sufficient, I shall fill in the details in my next.

'I have taken to buying everything myself; getting up to everything in the way of sugar, beef, bread, meat, butter, milk; know every bread-cart, carrier's cart, brewer's cart on the road; the day and moment they come and go; the price of coals, oil, candles; find that Belfast hams are outrageously dear; that eggs cannot be got save at a ruinous price; that fowls are getting thin and scraggy in this quarter, which is a shame; and that in Newburgh or Cupar such a thing as Finnan haddocks are not to be got for love or money. Pay everything as I get it, and intend doing so till the last day of my life, or as long as my money lasts, which, in present circumstances, will not be long. Intend starving after that.

'Have amassed this vast amount of information within a week, and mean devolving the duties connected with it on my sister within three days. Have learned it mainly because I was for two whole days without a servant; had to borrow one from Mr. Williamson of Collessie, and during said season had a succession of guests whom I entertained most attentively and most hospitably. I am glad to say, despite intense frost and snow, my visitors, a rare thing for this quarter, seemed thoroughly to enjoy themselves. Plenty of fire, plenty to eat, and plenty of talk will go a long way with sensible people.

'Parted yesterday from Lady Elizabeth and her husband. Very sorry that they have gone. Her mother and sisters, however, remain, and will be here all the summer. Lady Emily and Lady Susan are invaluable as Sabbath School

teachers, in visiting and making flannels for the poor, and in making themselves generally useful in the parish. They visit from door to door with unwearying assiduity, earning here the thanks of many a poor family, and hereafter a good reward.'

'AUCHTERMUCHTY, *Nov.* 3, 1862.

'The country is looking charming; the air is balmy as in spring; and the sere and yellow leaf gives its usual melancholy tone to this late autumn season. The more I see of the manses and livings in this neighbourhood, the more am I pleased with my own, the sweetest parish of them all.

'The entire Leven family were in church yesterday. They got two sermons, or rather sections of sermons, about forty minutes each. I dined with them the other day, and liked them very much. The Princess of Saxe-Weimar, a daughter of the Duke of Richmond, was of the party. A young lady, of German cast of countenance and reckoned a great beauty, was also a princess. Most prodigious! How great we are getting! Eating and drinking and playing at games with a live Princess!'

'LINDIFFERON, *Nov.* 17, 1862.

'Will you believe me when I say that I have written this blessed day already in this hole, where you would think one has nothing earthly to do, twelve letters, on all subjects and of all lengths; have driven some fifteen miles over the country, and have found it even on this wintry day such as a queen might envy; have entertained a gentleman to dinner; issued lines of marriage; read the *Scotsman* through; glanced into the *Edinburgh Review*, and called upon an old fogy of a minister? Dare any one dream, in view of facts like these, that we, here in Fife, are a lazy people?

'I was very much struck with a passage the other day from a Frenchman, M. Bantain: "Women write as they speak. They speak pretty much as the birds sing, and their language has the same charm. Add to this the sweetness of their organ, the flexibility of their voice, the variety of their intonations according to the feeling which animates them, the mobility of their physiognomy, which greatly increases the effect of their words"—I can vouch for that!—"the picturesqueness of their gestures, and, in short, the gracefulness of their whole exterior. Thus,

although not destined for orators by their sex or social position, they have all the power of the orator, and all his success in their sphere and in their circle of activity, for none know better how to *touch*, *persuade*, and *influence*, which is, I think, the end and perfection of eloquence."

'This is from the pen of one of the subtlest and most earnest Frenchmen whose works I ever read. With all their flightiness French writers have, I humbly think, a deeper and truer insight into the working of the human heart, into the *affaires du cœur* than our more ponderous English thinkers.

'I used to laugh at these things, and call them follies; but the human heart, with all its unutterable yearnings and longings, came from His hands, and there cannot be folly or sin in cherishing its pure and holy desires. In this huckstering, money-grubbing age it is refreshing to meet with an honest, earnest man, who can give this advice:

> '"Si vous voulez vous ruiner,
> Epousez une femme riche."

'*Saturday.*—After a long sederunt at that most wearisome of all things, a meeting of heritors, I got home at six o'clock, and had the sermon-barrel to search, having to preach at Dunbog in the morning and Monimail in the afternoon. About ten o'clock at night there was a tramp of heavy feet before my door, which turned my thoughts irresistibly to my pistol. Who were they, think you? Our new teacher escorting a deaf and dumb man and a deaf and dumb woman to get their "lines," with a view to being married!! Such a scene I never witnessed! The *conversation*, of course, was conducted entirely in writing, at which both were adepts. The woman carried a small slate and pencil with her, and made the whole thing clear in a few minutes. They were proclaimed yesterday, and are now married. My servant's opinion was, "It shouldna be allowed, sir," in which I most thoroughly agree.

'By the way, I am perfectly delighted with my domestic. She is a character. On telling her last night after prayers that I did not need anything, she put on a most rueful face and said, "Are you no' for ony toddy, sir?" evidently believing that a glass of toddy on a Sunday night is essential to the well-being of the Established Kirk: an opinion with which I have no wish to disagree.'

'LINDIFFERON, *Nov.* 22, 1862.

'All my friends at Spoutwells I found well. It is an empty house now compared with what it used to be. I almost think it selfish taking away my sister even for a little, and I could easily see that the old people felt her leaving, though they said nothing. With seventy-three years on my father's head there is little wonder that he begins to feel age telling on him, although he looks as hale and well as I ever saw him. A good old man if ever such breathed, ripe and ready for the change that in the course of nature cannot be very far distant.

'I likewise met in the Rev. Mr. —— of —— M.B. coat and vest, R.C. necktie, lisp and English drawl, fine face, tall figure, etc., the most complete puppy for a married man and a minister I ever met, and yet a good fellow to boot. If people only saw what fools they make of themselves by pride, they would hide their heads for shame.'

As the winter closed in his thoughts became more anxiously fixed on all that was passing in Glasgow. Miss Robertson wrote of her social engagements, the dances and parties in which she took so lively a part. Through the notes of gaiety and frolic, amid the lights and the flowers, there ran always the undercurrent of health, and to the lonely and anxious watcher in the country the life narrated in the letters seemed little fitted to subdue the persistent cough or to remove the fever which wore the fragile constitution. His letters are often a pathetic mixture of endeavouring not to seem churlish or a spoil-sport, combined with outbreaks, born of anxiety, over the amusements he thought so ill-adapted to the health of her who was the object of his unwearying solicitude:

'Take care of your general health, like a good lassie. That is the main point. And above all avoid as much as you possibly and decently can these furnaces of ballrooms. They kill the body and do the soul no good, and sometimes leave unpleasant memories.'

Not unnaturally Helen Robertson did not take this view, and in many a letter details the amusements in which she is engaged, by no means unconscious that a touch of very human jealousy mingles with the anxiety expressed by her

friend. She flits through the winter months, dressed in a red cloak, and sending laughing messages of her doings to the minister in the heart of the country. As the winter's darkness and storms set in, there are evidences of much heart-searching on his part, whether this town-bred, delicate girl were really fit to fill the part of the mistress of a country manse.

'*Nov.* 1862.

'Think of the weather we have here. The trees still densely clad in their russet-brown leaves. Every hue of the rainbow is reflected back from them. And then every gust of wind is bringing down the beautiful things to their grave. It is cold; but, oh! so pleasant. The more I live here and think of you coming to be with me, the more I thank God that I left Paisley.

'It's a happier life, a holier life, a heavenlier life. I did not think so when I accepted the living. I had no idea then of the pleasure I would have in it: rather did I look forward with an uneasy foreboding to the lonely life I should spend. Lonely! I am never less alone than when alone. I speak God's truth, perhaps shame that I should speak it, when I say that I have never looked back with one wistful look or thought to Paisley, dearly as I love it and ever shall. Not one Lot's wife's glance have I ever cast behind me.

'I do not know what H. K. R. will think of the manse of Monimail, or of the Parish. But this I know, there is not a minister of the round who does not covet it. Its only fault is that it is shut in by the trees of Melville Park. Believe it, I know both country and town, and the former I shall not leave save for Edinburgh.

'Yesterday I had a day's coursing, and I can get plenty of capital shooting round my door.

'Are you not philosopher enough to know what I have often prosed and preached about, that the true life of every being is their inner and hidden life, their states of feeling, their thoughts, aspirations, etc.? Every person should keep a brief diary to look back upon in those future years which I hope will come.

'"All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of Love
And feed His holy Flame."'

'*Dec.* 13, 1862.

'My dear H. K. R.,—I wish I could act on the motto your letter enclosed, "Banish care and welcome glee." Very much would I give if at this moment, and at all times, I could just do that. There is one sound recipe for all care, whose comfort I sometimes feel, though I ought to feel it more, "Cast all your care on Him, for He careth for you." "How shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" That is perhaps God's most blessed truth. Its logic is irrefragable. If He gave us the greater gift, will He withhold the less? It is a shame that we don't feel it more.'

'*Christmas Eve*, 1862.

'A merry Christmas to you and many, many of them, each one brighter, happier, better than its predecessor. I hope the annual return of this most welcome season brings much happiness and joy to you. God bless you and make you all your life long a blessing! May the first glad Christmas Carol break to-morrow with freshness from our hearts, "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and goodwill towards men." May He who came on Christmas Day to bless and save our world be evermore your Master and mine! Amen.

'I have been busy since dinner decorating my room with holly, and I am now sitting in a perfect thicket or forest of bright, glossy leaves. The excellence of the holly will be a compensation for the poverty of the Christmas dinner.'

'*Christmas*, 1862.

'"Rise, happy morn; rise, holy morn!
Draw forth the cheerful day from night.
O Father, touch the East, and light
The light that shone when Hope was born."

'On this day of all days of the year one has cause to be thankful, thankful for God's greatest gift and best, made to man on this day; thankful for Him, our Brother, who wears our nature beside the Throne; for the blessed hopes He has given us of a fair and happy life beyond the grave; for the mercies bestowed on us during the past year, not one of which was given us save for Christ's sake; thankful for happy hopes regarding the future of this world. Memories of a scene on which I once looked run in my mind, and cause my fondest earthly thought to pale beside it. It is the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem, and the cave in

that Church where I believe on this day 1862 years ago the Saviour of the world was born. In that spot, or very near that spot, Almighty God, for your sake and mine, became incarnate, and was born the son of a poor village maiden. The flicker of the little silver lamps burning there perpetually is, at this moment, in my eye. There are monks performing service before the altar in that old manger, and among them, reverently worshipping, are three Scottish strangers. While memory lasts I shall remember that hour; and mayhap, when I see Christ in Heaven, I shall look back with a clear eye on that holy spot. His blood cleanseth from all sin, and mine, black as it is, I hope is washed away. My prayer night and morning is that you, as well as I, may have an interest in Him, that we may grow up together in His blessed likeness, and both be found of Him at last, without spot and blameless. Oh! dear me! what are all the pleasures of earth compared with the assurance that He is our Saviour? What all the hopes compared with the hope of spending our eternity together with Him? What is all the love compared with the love of Him, who sticketh closer than a brother?

'If I write thus, on this happy Christmas Day, it is because I know that no being stands more in need of His mercy than myself, and because I hope that as I never forget you at the Throne of Grace, you will not forget me.'

CHAPTER V

MONIMAIL

1863

'Does the road wind up hill all the way?
Yes, to the very end.
Will the day's journey take the whole long day?
From morn to night, my friend.'

THE year 1863 found the minister of Monimail still hard at work, and happy among his people. Church politics touched him in the next parish, where 'the Dunbog Case' absorbed his attention. It was one of those dreary disputes between the patron and the parishioners. On what the Assembly dismissed as frivolous and unsustained grounds, objections were raised to the 'Call' of the Rev. Mr. Edgar. In the Assembly of that year Mr. Mac Gregor was to be the champion of patron and minister, and most eloquently and decisively did he defend his case.

Early in January he records the call of Mr. Edgar at Dunbog: 'The church crowded. Afterwards violent excitement and disorder. Call signed by twelve members and six concurrents amid hissing and yelling.'

The same notes are made in the country as were entered in the town concerning the difficulty of making a methodical use of time: 'Dogged resolution required to carry out work in the country. Long distances run away with time, a visit or two occupying a day. Regular pastoral visitation must be commenced. Lectures, Alexandria Mission must begin at once. Read the whole of Bishop Colenso's first volume.'

In January, ten days after the call of Mr. Edgar, he says: 'Williamson drove me to Dunbog. Full church and all quietness and order. Mr. Jamieson appeared for the

parishioners. Campbell Smith for Mr. Edgar. Ten objections to settlement. All frivolous and irrelevant. Mr. Edgar perseveres.'

A close correspondence was kept up with Glasgow:

'*Jan.* 28, 1863.

'What a fearful night I had yesterday crossing the Firth. The foresail was torn into ribbons by the wind. After sitting at a soirée till I was stewed, I drove home amid howling wind and pelting rain, and the result is a very nice incipient cold.

'I am thankful for my mercies to the Giver of all our good. Few have more reason to be so. For years I have had no pain save what I brought by carelessness upon myself.'

'St. Andrews, *March* 1863.

'This morning I met the students and addressed them for an hour, some of the ministers of town and one professor being present. To-morrow I preach twice, once in St. Mary's and then in the evening to the Students' Missionary Association. I remember your asking once if I had no other object than love for the Jews in running about lecturing, speaking, and preaching. There is one very considerably higher, my love for the Church. I believe that no Church can expect to prosper, or to get God's blessing, that does not try to do good to the Jews and the heathen. There is still another reason, personal to myself and therefore somewhat selfish, a desire to keep myself in work, and not get rusty in the quiet of a country parish. With some spare time on my hands why not employ it in doing some little good in God's world, even though it should entail labour and trouble and botheration. One day or other the world will slip through our fingers, and all we hold dearest in it. Only the *good* we have done will remain. That cannot pass away. It is written down in the memory of God, registered in the books of His Divine Retribution. We will need it all when we come to give in our account of our service and go to get our wages—our love, and kindliness and faith, and unselfishness, and well-doing—we will need it all and more than all when God puts the question to us: "Of what use have you been in My world? What have you done with the talents and the time I gave you?" God

help and keep us both and make us, in Christ's worthiness, worthy to stand together before Him on that great day. They are great facts,—great realities these which we have much need to keep steadily in mind.

'It is surely extreme folly for beings like ourselves, standing on the very shore of the Eternal Ocean, hearing faint murmurs of the far-off land, and not knowing at what moment we may be called on to set sail and join in another world the friends who have gone before us—great folly, I say, not to think often and seriously about these things, and make some preparation in view of them.

'I feel Sabbath to be a blessed day were it only for this, that it brings one closer than usual with eternal realities. Especially after preaching there is always a feeling of deep dejection that one does so little for God, and that in the attempt to do even that little so much of *self* comes in.'

'I think I had more to do yesterday than on any past Sunday of my life—a long double service of two hours in my own church, a drive through sleet and snow to Strathmiglo, three long table services there, and the service in the evening. Up early this morning and off to Ferry-Port-on-Craig to lecture there, not in the freshest condition possible.'

'Here is my programme for eight days: lecture in Arbroath on 11th; induction of Burns, 12th; lecture in Montrose, 13th; preach there evening of 15th; lecture in Laurencekirk, 16th; ditto Brechin, 17th; ditto Fettercairn, 18th; ditto Montrose again, 19th. Object, money for mission premises in Alexandria. I wish to get a little sum in hand before appealing to the country, and I find that unless I do the work myself nobody will do it for me. The decent young fellows of Edinburgh, out of their limited income, have given me £10. The St. Andrews students, a mere handful, £5. Both promising to work for us during the summer months.'

Later on he is able to add:

'I got into the meeting of committee in good time on Saturday, and have the happiness to tell you that we have fixed on Beyrout as another station of our Mission, half the expenses to be borne by our Church in Canada and half by the Church at home. The missionary will have to visit Jerusalem and the large towns of Palestine at least once a

year. One strong wish of mine has thus been realised, to have a Jewish Mission within the shadow of Lebanon, and on the borders if not actually within the Holy Land.'

'I was glad to see the Melville family at Communion, but sorry to miss Lady Elizabeth. You have no idea how great a loss a person of her influence is to a country church. Bother the Puseyites!

'But better ladies more attentive to the duties of their station than the Ladies Melville do not live. They go away very soon, and will leave a blank behind them.

'To-morrow we shall have a weary day at the Presbytery with that Dunbog case, fated I fear to become unhappily celebrated. It is perfectly wonderful what a stir in a quiet place like this a small teapot storm can make.'

'The only thing of importance going on here is that interminable case of Dunbog. Your humble servant, by openly and honestly stating the law on the matter in the Presbytery, has drawn down upon his head the vengeance of the Dunbogians. They are blinded by prejudice and anger at what they deem an intrusion, and of course are exceedingly wroth that the Presbytery have not done what the Presbytery dare not and cannot do.

'My opinion of the Presbytery has risen 100 per cent. by seeing the noble stand which the generality took on the side of justice, and in spite of popular odium.'

'Lindifferon House, *March* 4, 1863.

'A bright and beautiful morning as one could ever wish to see. The crocuses, spring roses, snowdrops, and even heather, are before the window in a perfect flush of bloom. A calm, quiet morning, in which one feels his spirit calmed by the stillness and loveliness of nature. Hardly a breath of wind moving the bare branches of the trees. I asked you when through in Glasgow to read a chapter along with me every morning at ten, that I might feel communion with you in the reading of the Word of God. To-morrow I shall be reading Acts xix. Please go on from that chapter taking one every day, and keeping time, so that we may always be not only in the same spirit but in the same place. There is nothing more profitable than the regular and intelligent perusal of that word which maketh wise unto salvation. May God ever bless the reading of it

to both of us, "and in His wisdom make us wise." The knowledge of the truth and the practice of the truth are the two things we specially need in this world as professed candidates for a better.'

On the marriage of the Prince of Wales:

'*March* 12, 1863.

'On Monday morning I went early to the village, gave a jelly-piece, a cookie, a bag of raisins, and an orange to 200 children, and a loaf of bread, tea, and sugar to 60 poor people. Then off to Edinburgh!! I am very glad that I did not miss one of the grandest spectacles it was ever my lot to see. Despite the vast masses of people there wasn't the slightest crushing, and the good humour of the crowd was something marvellous.

'There were three objects that specially struck me—the first, the dome of St. George's Church, the chastest thing in the whole illuminations. The delicate lines of the architecture and the exquisite sweep of the dome were brought out into sharp relief against the blackness of the night. Then the castle, seen from the Calton Hill, was marvellous, the lights being so arranged as to bring out the masses of rock and the battlements into clear relief against blocks of blackness where no light flickered. But the grandest sight of all to my mind was the Salisbury Crags, and far above them the bonfire on the top of Arthur's Seat, looking like a cluster of vast constellations hung up in the heavens. The street illuminations, with their endless "May they be happy," etc. etc., looked to me somewhat gimcrack and gingerbread. The street illuminations of Cairo the night we entered it were much finer if one judged by the effect.

'Of course our bonfire eclipsed Edinburgh! Visible from the Grampians and the Sidlaws to the Ochils and Lammermuirs. The bells chimed merrily during the day. What a dust and din about a wedding! Isn't it deafening? I had to organise a begging expedition of young ladies, who made an inroad on the pockets of the farmers to get money for the tea and sugar.

'We should remove to-morrow to Barham Cottage, but as Mr. Landale does not move just yet, we shall take a day or two's grace. You have no idea of the bother we are having and shall be put to. No place in the manse but one room to put a stick of furniture in, and when the term comes I

suspect there is not a shadow of a chance that the manse will be in anything like a fit state to live in. These and other unforeseen troubles must be put up with. What is the use of fretting, although it really tries one's patience when it might have been finished!

'There is not a man, woman, or child in Monimail who is not abusing heritors and all concerned. I rarely meet a person who does not say, "It 's a shame, sir, that you have been knocked about in this way since you cam' among us." Despite all this there is one who has never deeply felt any trouble in the matter, and that is myself. Things have come and gone. I have always had a comfortable house over my head.

'At a meeting of Presbytery to-morrow in Dunbog I shall ascertain the best steps to take. We parish ministers, you are aware, can *compel* heritors to give us good gardens, good walls, good everything. Happy fellows!'

'*March* 15, 1863.

'What do you think of this programme of the Communion week here? Prayer meeting on Tuesday night preparatory to Sacrament; three services on Fast Day; one long one on Saturday; then Sabbath and Sabbath evening; and lastly, a very long one on Monday. Far too much, and yet many good people like it and derive benefit from it.

'You have no idea how beautiful everything is looking here. To me it 's a perfect charm getting out among the Melville woods, which are just over the way. I go through them every time I visit the village, preferring the quiet of the "bosky woods" to the dusty road.

'The crows are all in love just now, and away up in the high trees are making fully as much noise about it as our young friend in Glasgow. The old crows are croaking away like human crows about the great confidence of youthful affection, and doing all they can to secure happy and prosperous unions for their beloved young crows. People who play whist might do so all day beneath the tall trees of Melville and not in the least disturb the pleasant tête-à-têtes going on above them, however unpleasant the *cawing* might be to them. Happy crows! no trouble have you about manses and stipends! And yet, poor blackguards, you have your troubles like other folks! These nasty sportsmen will make sad havoc of your homes and bairns by and by! This I perceive is a

world of troubles even to crows. Great is their anxiety, poor things, about these nests of theirs, to build them high up out of the reach of danger, and great their dread of guns.

'The sweet spring woods are vocal thus early with tenderest music. One never gets out of rapture with Nature's beauties here. Such a walk as I had to-night through the Melville Park, the parish lantern shining brightly above, and the old trees casting their bare black arms in shadows of moonlight across the sward.'

'*April* 2, 1863.

'What a row you have been making about that rare old plant our Premier Green? Have you seen him or heard him? He is well deserving all the honour that your princely city can bestow. I got a paper from my brother and waded through all the speeches at Glasgow and at Greenock. The Rectorial address was very poor, as might have been expected from one whose years are so many and whose hands are so full as the worthy Premier's [Lord Palmerston].

'Hope you took Communion yesterday and found Christ very near you as a Comforter and Friend. I was thinking of you as partaking of the Memorials of His dying love.

'To-morrow is the meeting of Synod, and if at all well I must be there to support the Presbytery's decisions. It looks like henning at the last moment to be absent, more especially if I do not go to Assembly. There is duty in the case, and that must, at all hazards, be done.

'There has been a very sudden death in my congregation. Oh! how many voices there are ever whispering to us, "Be ye also ready."

'We are all more mercifully dealt with than we deserve. I was much struck last night, in reading good old Isaak Walton, with some remarks of his: "Every misery we are spared is a fresh mercy." "There are as many miseries beyond riches as on this side of them." "He that loses his conscience has nothing else that is worth the keeping."'

Towards the end of March the minister shifted his lodgings from Lindifferon, so kindly lent him, and where he had resided since his call to Monimail. His new quarters were at Barham Cottage:

'I think I shall like it very much. By this time the manse ought to be ready, but it is still far from completion.

No idea when it will be fit for residence. On the whole a country life is a pleasant one, and if settled in the manse I would like it better.'

At the end of the month he says: 'The manse looking somewhat better than it did last year when I accepted the living of Monimail.'

The Sundays pass filled with strenuous preaching in his own church and beyond it. 'Preached at Monimail. Cupar in the evening. Lectured to a full church on Jews and the East. Drove back in an open machine, dripping with perspiration.'

In April he went to Glasgow, but what he found there was not calculated to brighten his prospects: 'My anticipated pleasure in the West sadly disappointed by the finger of God. The future lies in His hand. Let us ever trust in Him.'

From the West his destiny was again preparing to meet him, and it was soon to be made clear that 'sweet Monimail' was not to be his rest.

The Dunbog case took him to the Synod at Kirkcaldy, where 'all the objections were found irrelevant.' He was soon back in Glasgow, ever finding manifold excuses to be with those who were never out of his thoughts. His brothers Dugald and Daniel took their degrees at the University, and he notes supping with Dr. Norman Macleod: 'Met many students, smoked a cigar, and got Dr. Norman's opinion of the Jewish Missions.'

On his return to his parish he found a letter from the Town Council of Glasgow asking him if he would be willing to become assistant and successor to Dr. Boyd, minister of the Tron Church. Writing to Miss Robertson, he tells her of this communication:

'*April* 27, 1863.

'I have opened my letters and find one from the "congregation" of the Tron Church asking if I would become assistant and successor to Dr. Boyd, with, as I understand, the full stipend of £425. They ask what days or day they could hear me.'

In May he was speaking on the Alexandria Mission in Glasgow. Mr. Jas. A. Campbell took part in the meeting, and Mr. Mac Gregor remarks, 'Tron people present.' Wearily he adds, 'Soliciting subscriptions I find the most thankless work I ever tried.' He must have been in an unusually depressed frame of mind, for no one was ever more successful in raising money, or in making people feel that their money or their lives were the only points of view entertained by the imperious raider for those missions he had so literally at heart. 'Inspected the Tron Church and like it' is another significant entry before he turns back again to Monimail.

'*May* 10.—Had restless night. Rose unrefreshed. Long service in Monimail, two and a half hours. Consulted Williamson about Tron. Advised me not to think of it. On the whole, better where I am.

'*May* 25. Up at 4 A.M. Left by first train for Edinburgh. Spoke in General Assembly on Alexandria Mission. Spoke on Dunbog case. Settled unanimously.'

'*May* 13, 1863.

'For the last three hours I have been enjoying the now rare luxury of being perfectly alone, and enjoying what none but bachelors can prize, a solitary dinner, at the fashionable hour of six, on the most excellent of all dishes—a dish of young crows. To think that the delicate creatures were croaking their uncouth baby-songs in my ears last Sunday, and are this day fulfilling the purpose of their creation in quite a different way.

'Suddenly there hopped upon my plate—not a living crow to take vengeance, like another Edgar Allan Poe's Raven—not a crow, but the image of something quite the opposite of a crow—the image of a being far away on a distant shore bending over a big Bible. There was a sort of twilight gloom about that house. There was a clock ticking out its mournful moments, and I distinctly heard the dull thud of the wave upon the beach. The rustling of the wind outside shook the window panes. Was that a ghost that was moving? And then as the last crow disappeared from my plate there was a sigh of satisfaction at having managed the crow, and a sigh of sorrow that I was not present to

keep away all hobgoblins and ghosts and eerie fancies from the figure poring over the Bible. So you see I have not been all alone at this bachelor dinner of mine.'

'*May* 20, 1863.

'Yesterday as I was placidly beginning the sermon—the big Bible shut before me and the wee Bible open in my hand—just as I was getting out the first sentence in which the word "Newspaper" occurred, who should step in, to my horror and confusion, but a deputation of four from the Tron Church. It took the breath from me for a moment. I was going to have a talk with my people about the Sabbath, and here are these four ghouls sitting in solemn judgment. Fancy my predicament. It requires an effort to get over the queer feeling that comes over one in such a position. I am glad to say that I managed it. The moment the Benediction was pronounced they bolted with the speed with which they entered, having heard such a sermon as I venture to say they have not heard for a long time, and which might be fatal to my interests in the Tron.

'To crown all, a letter came in saying that the list of candidates has been reduced, that my name stands first on the list, and that the congregation wish to hear me in Glasgow in a fortnight or three weeks.'

'EDINBURGH, *May* 26, 1863.

'Along with this you will get a *Scotsman* giving you the facts of the Dunbog case. It excited great interest, the court being choke full. I got such congratulations on my speech for laying open the facts of the case as would be too fulsome to put on paper. The conflict has ended, as I was certain it would, in the utter defeat of the people.

'We had "innovations as to worship," "organs," etc., which went against us.

'I was down last night at Holyrood. Lady Belhaven very kindly stopped her carriage yesterday in the street and invited me to the evening party. It was a very splendid affair. Military gentlemen and fair ladies, making the old rooms quite gay. Downs was there and was great. Was introduced to A. K. H. B., who chose to compliment me highly on my appearance at the Assembly. I am afraid that I will get too proud of myself!

'Was asked by the Moderator to preach before the Commissioner on Sabbath first, and refused, so far as it is possible

to refuse. I only fear the Assembly may appoint me, when no denial can be taken. I hope I have got out of a duty which hundreds covet but which I would extremely dislike.

'I was struck especially with the number of young men who formed the bulk of the Assembly. For a hundred years, I presume, young men never took so prominent a part in the business and in the debates. It is one of the most healthy signs of our Church that we have such a galaxy of rising genius. Don't mistake me—I see that merry twinkle of the eye. I mean men much younger than I feel myself to be. To my amazement I have just received another letter from the Tron, telling me that with my permission a committee of four are coming to hear me on Sabbath first. I am sure my last answer was explicit enough.

'I am pleased on the whole with the Assembly, but am heartily tired of it. It is most fagging work. We have done a good deal of sound work, but there has been nothing like brilliant speaking. A week of Edinburgh makes me more than ever in love with the quiet of the country, to which I return with great inward satisfaction.'

'*May* 28, 1863.

'Just a line or two before going out this morning to say that I have had a deputation through here from Glasgow, and who have just left, offering me plump and plain the new church of Partick.

'They say that there is no doubt of the church succeeding as well as Park or Sandyford churches. They were authorised to offer £400 to begin with. I sent them away without anything like hope. Showed them how I could not go.

'Very much pleased with this Assembly on the whole, its quietness, and the leading part taken by the younger members, such as Charteris, Story, and others.'

Mr. Mac Gregor's brother Dugald, having taken his medical degree, had an offer to go as ship's surgeon to Otago, New Zealand. With his brother's advice, based on the ground he had better go than be idle some months, he accepted it, and the two brothers went home to Spoutwells.

'Dugald walked to Perth with me. Parted from him at the station without any demonstration, but with a prayer

to God for his guidance in life. He left me in good spirits, but I left not knowing if I should see him again.'

'*June* 1, 1863.

'My dear Helen,—Dr. Dugald has been busy to-day attending an old friend of mine who fell from his horse. We have family prayers together to-night. Who knows but it may be for the last time. Well, what if it be? I think Dugald has the root of the matter in him, and should he settle abroad, and it be fated that we part here for ever, there is that most blessed hope of the meeting which knows no parting. He goes away with the shield over him of a good father and mother's prayers, and better defence man can never have.'

'*June* 2.—Parted from Dugald to-day at the station in great spirits. The silent pressure of the hand alone told that it was anything else than a common parting. When shall we two meet again? He looks forward with something like horror to to-morrow's parting at home. There will be Grace crying like to break her heart; for they have loved each other and fought with each other ever since they can remember anything; and then the old man with his fatherly, "God bless you and keep His fear before you," and my mother who will never shed a tear, but will bid him bravely "God speed," and then, after he has fairly gone, shut herself up and cry herself nearly blind. Poor dear father and mother, at their time of life it *is* hard to part with their children.

'Great squibs are going about in the local papers regarding the Dunbog case, the unanimity of the Assembly's decision having taken Fife by surprise. A countryman is reputed to have said, "Well, we had the *weight* of the Presbytery with us, Cupar, Keith, and Ceres, 45 stones at the least—whereas the *great gun* that fired into us at Edinburgh is a thing of only 45 pounds."

'I have come back from the Assembly with the firm determination to settle down to hard study and work, and to turn the quiet of the country to better account than I have done. For one thing I am to recommence sermon-writing, and to bestow more pains upon that department of labour than I have yet done. "The shoemaker should stick to his last."

'The chapter I am reading to-day is Timothy II. 2.

What marvellous writing that of Paul is! There is a depth of meaning in it which seems unfathomable. Oh! for more of that man's spirit, his love, his faith, and above all his dauntless intrepidity for Christ. What a hero he was! What a splendid specimen of humanity! I am selfish enough to love him all the more because "his bodily presence was weak and his speech contemptible"; and yet no man ever did more for Christ and for Christ's world.

'What else are you reading? I came across this true maxim to-day, which I write down: "If you love learning, you'll get learning"—a profounder maxim than at first sight appears.

'Well, after all, we must go back to the good Word, which says, "Man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God."'

The firm determination to settle down to his work was interrupted in June by another application from the undaunted patrons of the Tron. They were determined to have Mr. Mac Gregor 'at all costs.' His experiences with the High Kirk made him determined to have his stipend on no doubtful footing. He felt himself in many respects well off at Monimail; he was still hoping against his growing convictions that the life and climate would suit Helen Robertson, and to her he tells the developments of the assault and battery from the oncoming deputation. In his diary he says:

'Another application from the Tron stating that the committee are coming through to hear me.

'*June* 4.—I must prepare for to-morrow. Be good enough to direct a thought towards Monimail and the minister exposed to the critical inspection of some tobacconist or sugar-seller of the Cowcaddens, and let the thought inspire you with some tenderness and sympathy.'

'*June* 15, 1863.

'I begin to visit on Monday morning and continue without intermission till Saturday night, giving two addresses in the course of each day, one at two o'clock and another at eight o'clock at night. Then the week following the same, on till the Fast Day, when I shall have visited the whole parish with the exception of one or two farms near Cupar.

A pretty ten days' work, is it not? I hope I may have strength for it.

'The four men (from the Tron) came here on Saturday with the most exorbitant preconceived opinions of your humble servant. Somebody had been putting it into their heads that I am about as near perfection in the ministerial point of view as is permitted in this sublunary scene.

'They moreover believe that if I was in the Tron everything would go on in the most swimming way. Well, with these views they were authorized to offer me the full stipend of £425 in the meantime, with the assurance that when I come to the full charge I should have £500. I showed them to their own satisfaction that to accept of such an offer would be a dead loss, and that I would never entertain the idea at all, unless on these terms—a guarantee of £500 in the meantime, and an assurance of £600 on the death of Dr. Boyd: on which terms I would be inclined to entertain their proposal favourably, giving them however no promise. They dined here yesterday after hearing me. The parish is in a stew, at least the village—an old woman expressing her astonishment that the driver who brought them from Cupar did not hurl them into the daft mill-burn. They told me that I would virtually have no parish work to do, as the parish is composed of Roman Catholics, and that I might live perfectly well at the far west end of the town.

'The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord. May He guide us in this as in all things. If we consult His glory we shall consult our good.'

From diary:

'After I deemed the affair settled, find myself again in trouble regarding it. Deputation called and offered the church with the full stipend. Difficult matter what to do in the circumstances.'

'*June* 19, 1863.

'Throw up your cap or anything that comes handy and cry hip! hip! hurrah! Monimail for ever! It is finally arranged that there is to be no movement towards Glasgow.

'The deputation, on reporting to their committee Mr. Mac Gregor's decision, found themselves unable to fulfil his terms, so *that* settles *that* matter, and lets me get on in peace.

'I find that for an earnest man and minister there is more than abundance of work to do in this parish. In all country places there is a terrible stolidity and sterility of soul. They somehow get dead and stupid, and there is no rousing of them. If I could by labour, by visiting, by preaching, by prayer, introduce a new life into this parish, I should thank God that my labour had not been in vain. A man might die very comfortably, like Moses with his harness on his back, if he only knew that like Moses he had done God's work and had angels in waiting to take him up to his reward.

'In other words, I had at one time the impression that in leaving a parish of 14,000 and a congregation of at least as many hundreds for a quiet country parish of 1000 souls I was doing something sinful, something for which I could not very well answer when I went upstairs. That opinion has undergone a change. There is as much work to do in this parish for the souls of men and for the glory of God as any one man is fit for. And when the reckoning day comes it will not be the large or the little parish, the large or the little stipend that will be looked to, but the number of souls born to a new life under one's ministry.

'Already I have had experience how much more pleasant it is to deal with souls in the country than in the town. You have more time to attend to them, to see them more closely, to speak to them more plainly, and to know the result of your ministerial work. You work at random in the town; you *see* what you are doing in the country.

'One thing I can't help saying is this—that one whole year of my life has gone very nearly for nothing. In this parish of Monimail I have for close on one year preached most faithfully, far more than I ever did in Paisley. I have seen the sick and dying as regularly as I could. I have attended to the Sabbath School and done all the ordinary duties of a country clergyman, but I have never felt really at home; never could say this is my rest! never looked on the parish as my parish, never had within me the conviction that I am here for God's work and must do it. Perhaps the reason has been that I have never had a home, that I have been knocked about like an old shoe, that I have always been anticipating a change first to one place, then to another. After weary waiting for that manse I go into it some time this week. The flitting takes place to-morrow. Once in order it will be a very cosy nest if I had the bird in it. For

close on a year I have been looking at the manse, and for the major part of that time have been assured by architect and heritors that I would get into it *next month*. Month after month has passed away, and here am I still in Barham Cottage. Do you wonder at the manse bulking large in my view? Once in it I shall feel myself minister of Monimail.'

The move to the manse was at last effected, but the minister and his sister did not find themselves in sole possession. An entry which householders will recognise as accurate appears in the diary: 'Painters still in the house—carpetless, curtainless, and comfortless. Furniture very much destroyed in moving. May the blessing of God rest on us all while in it.'

His homecoming was darkened by heavy news from Glasgow. Helen had a renewal of the ever-dreaded symptoms, and his anxiety deepened. Determined to keep a brave and cheerful spirit amid all the tumult of his mind, he writes a description of his entry into the much-longed-for manse:

'MONIMAIL MANSE, *June* 26, 1863.

'From 6.30 A.M. till ditto at night the house is one weltering sea of sound. Whang, whang goes the mason's mallet! Whish, whish goes the painter's brush! Tramp, tramp go their great feet! But to every sorrow there is an end. They all leave the *inside* of the house to-day, and blessings be with the *backs* of them. May it be long before I see their faces again.'

His defence of the patron and of Mr. Edgar's presentation to Dunbog had caused 'bitter and savage attacks' to be made on him in the parish, and he always felt such manifestations acutely. He was asked to preach at Mr. Edgar's induction, and to his correspondent he sketches the sermon he might write which would be suitable to the occasion. The one he preached at the induction was on a different subject, but the sermon on Barabbas was written. It was one of great power, and always delivered with the remembrance of the occasion which had directed his thoughts to the frequent injustice of popular verdict.

'I must hunt up a sermon to preach at Dunbog to-

morrow. Mac strongly recommends me to preach my sermon on the text, "Then cried they all again saying, 'Not this man but Barabbas'—now Barabbas was a robber." The heads are singularly suitable: (1) Popular suffrage wrong for once. (2) Crime receiving the reward of virtue. (3) The world's estimate of human excellence (choked the life out of Christ). (4) The fatal folly of rejecting Christ (God's curse lying on the Jew since that day, so on us).

'I won't preach it, however, as it might look personal and might keep alive the irritation for which I am exceedingly vexed. I am told that the road up to the church is to be hung with black flags!! Poor misguided people, led by the nose by a man who is half-lunatic and whole rogue!'

'*July* 11, 1863.

'What a day of heat this is! and how I pity you cooped up in Glasgow. Sitting at our open window and looking out on green fields and trees, I can hardly breathe without an effort.

'Everything went off well yesterday at Dunbog, barring one scene, occasioned by a woman. The church was full; the audience attentive and composed. There was no hissing, but when the inducting minister proceeded to put the questions, usual on such occasions, to Mr. Edgar, an excited woman got up and began to make a speech, demanding that Mr. Mac Gregor should come forward and prove his statements. Of course, poor creature, they hissed her, and she was summarily put down. Black flags were waving from all the hill-tops, and an effigy of Mr. Edgar was suspended by the neck to a tree by the roadside. That, however, we did not observe. The reverend gentleman looks a mild, pleasant, but firm man, who will hold his own. He is a scholarly fellow.

'A farmer and I have had a long chat about chalders—my head is swimming with chalders—and he is of opinion that they have not much chance of improving materially in time to come. We have discussed the price of stock and grain and potatoes, and the chances of an ever-increasing influx of foreign grain into this country to keep the markets down, a blessing to the people but a diminution of income to the ministers. I confess that since a certain epoch in my life £ s. d. have assumed in my eyes an importance they never had before—an undue importance, I fear.'

His next journey was to Loch Goil, where in July the Robertsons had gone for change of air. Before going he had had a letter from Helen, telling him that the doctor had found the left lung affected: 'Just what I feared from all her past symptoms, and yet the intelligence has completely prostrated me. The Lord have mercy and spare her if it is His will.'

The hope which was his eternal possession sprang to his relief, and he says 'Care and caution may do much. Her constitution otherwise good, if she can get over this horrible trouble.' He returned to his parish with a great reluctance, and he wrote of his happy hours by the broad waters of the west, when he had to return to the woods and fields of his Fife home:

'Instead of being the staid and sedate parson of Monimail, with more than thirty summers *on*, and more than one grey hair *in* his head, I feel a sort of wild when I think of the hills, the rocks, the rivers, the loch, the garden, the flowers. All are present as I pen these lines. It is difficult getting down to serious work after them. Many a tour I have had among the wilds of Skye, among the beauties of Windermere and her sister lakes, among the hills of Wales and the mountains of Switzerland, among the canals of Holland and the quaint old towns of Germany, among the isles of Greece and the glories of Italy; aye, and among scenes holier and more lovely than these—the old Bible-lands of the Pharaohs and the patriarchs, the prophets and the priests, the apostles and the martyrs; but above them all commend me to the peace and quiet of that week. It will live in memory's eye should the rest pass away, a real oasis such as those I have seen with the bodily eye, but fresher and fairer than any of them. What a farce for you to say you have no poetry in you!

'All true hearts have poetry in them. The faculty of poetry does not lie in the power of uttering rhymes and quoting verses by the hundred, but in realising the beauties that lie deep in all true natures, in feeling after and giving expression to that higher and more beautiful life which rises above soap and bread and butter and ribbons and silk and the external trash of life. All truly religious people must to a greater or less extent be poetical. There is poetry in

rising above the coarse cares and common concerns of this work-a-day world; in soaring up to those unseen regions where we are to spend our real and eternal life.'

'1863.

'That blue firth which rolls so softly up to your garden; those colossal hills that tower around you; those flowers that climb to your window-sill;—these are all God's "words," designed to feed our better life, and teach us how good and kind must be the maker of them all. There is an immense depth of meaning in these, as in all the words of Christ. I shall set to it to-morrow.

'I am glad you are likely to get out of the U.P. Church before its amalgamation with the Frees, and to come back to the bosom of the Church. A "Union" will be the practical annihilation of the Free Church, and of all Free Church principles, for they hold to the doctrine of Church and State just as firmly as I do.'

'*July* 3, 1863.

'I have discovered by a process of mental inspection that the pleasurable stimulus obtained in town ministerial work, and of which I had a large share, for instance, the intensely delightful feeling of preaching to a very large congregation—a feeling which carries you on for the earlier days of the week, and the hope of which, or the fear of which, or whatever you may call it, nerves you up during the later days of the week;—I have discovered that that stimulus has never been missed by me in the intensest retirement and quiet of the country. Pray, understand me. By this stimulus I mean a wholesome and even holy excitement, such as that which arises from a sense of deep responsibility, of a necessity for work, or from preaching God's word to a large mass of human souls.

'I used to have it regularly, and I have not felt the want of it. Why? In the terms of one of Dr. Chalmers' greatest sermons: "Because of the expulsive power of a new affection." How otherwise *could* I have spent days and days at Lindifferon in the midst of the sternest solitude, after the bustle of a seven years' active town-life, and never felt for one moment weary? How is it still that, with all my yearning for a sphere of labour larger and fuller than I have here, I am as contented and merry as possible, and

could look forward to a lifetime spent here, were it God's will, without a compunction, without a pang?

'After all there can be no doubt that the life we live within ourselves, and that the outside world knows nothing of, and would just care as little though it knew, is the only true life, the only life that will be with us when we throw off the raiment of the body, and bound as spirit to the blaze of day.'

'The Manse, Monimail, *Monday* (*July*).

'We have got all our Communion Services over very comfortably, having had the most beautiful weather I think I ever saw. We have great reason to be thankful to God for His goodness to us in this respect. Two hundred and fifty-eight sat down at the tables—a large number for a small population. Of course at all times and in all "places" a Communion Season is a time of great solemnity. Much more so, perhaps, in a country parish, where the old and frail, if they miss the opportunity, have no other chance till next Communion comes round. To-day the attendance was small, owing to the excellence of the weather, and the anxiety of the farmers to get in their hay.'

'*Aug.* 1863.

'Patience, thou blessed attribute! How could we get on without thee? How we would worry and fret this miserable life away but for thy benign help. It is among the ranks of the poor and lowly that we see that grace in most frequent and most beautiful operation. I never return from visiting my poor sick people without learning a lesson of thankfulness from them. They are so patient under suffering, so thankful for the least attention, so submissive to God's sovereign will. I suspect that it still holds true that "God hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him." One poor old body, whom I saw to-night, is eighty-five years of age, and is the grandmother of how many living children, think you? Fifty-two! She had twelve of a family, all of whom were married and had families. Six of these are living, and six dead; counting herself, there are no less than fifty-eight of her family alive on the earth. I told her that she was verily a mother in Israel.

'Of all unpleasant duties in this world these house flittings, etc., are about the most unpleasant. The truth is no gentle-

man should have anything to do with them. Why not turn pig and live in a sty?

'By the way, the other day I passed the miller's, and I saw, in four separate sties, four of the most comfortable and colossal pigs my eyes ever looked upon. They were each stretched at full length in the sun, dozing after dinner, for their troughs were licked empty. Perfect pictures of serene enjoyment, unclouded happiness. There was the true ring of contented peacefulness in their short *sweet* grumph, and the twinkle of the little eye revealed a world of easy, oily jollity. What a glorious thing, I thought for a minute, to be a miller's pig. No care, no trouble, no sore heart, no bother, no worry, no work, nothing to do all day but eat and sleep and grumph! After all, I suspect Tennyson's lines are true:

'"Like a beast with lower pleasures,
Like a beast with lower pains."

'All pain is a mystery—a mystery which we may never solve fully, not even when we see face to face, and know even as we are known. We only know it is the result of sin, and the mystery lies in the cause; and we know this, too, that the higher the nature, the more exquisitely moulded and strong, the higher the pain. A jarring note from a rich toned piano would pain us more than the same false note from a barrel organ. So the devils have a worse time of it than we have. They are higher natures. They have fallen from a loftier pinnacle. They have plunged into a deeper abyss of shame and misery.'

From diary:

'*August* 9.—Have been a year in this parish, and from various causes have not done as much parochial work as I would like.'

The serpent of indecision had entered his paradise of Monimail, and his mind was unsettled. The Tron Church continued its insistent call, and would turn to no other applicant. In the autumn Miss Robertson and her mother came to reside at St. Andrews, and though he persuaded himself she left much the better for her three weeks in that bracing air, there was no real improvement.

The first wet day in the manse had proved the walls any-

thing but water-tight, and as he faced the winter he saw neither climate nor manse were fit for his future wife. His engagement to Miss Robertson had never been announced, and the opinion of the doctors did not make it likely that they would be married soon.

His October Communion showed the influence he had attained over his people. His strenuous interest in their homes had slowly but surely affected his scattered parishioners, and they had become as devoted and as proud of their minister as had been those in his city charge.

Occasionally in his correspondence he vehemently sets forth the difficulty of reaching the slow and cautious low-lander. He expected more outward and visible signs of acceptance of that word of salvation which he preached with the fiery zeal which was always the dominant note of his ministry. There are grown men and women to-day who remember his visits to the parish school, his catechising, and earnest exhortations to the scholars that they should be Bible students, and walk 'humbly with their God.' Always himself deeply convinced, whole-heartedly sincere, his teaching was ever arresting, and the bright cheer of his manner was engaging to the youth gathered under his examination and teaching.

His troubled mind only made him more eager to visit his sick, and an outbreak of diphtheria brought him at all hours into the homes of his flock. He had to keep his anxieties to himself, but the letters he wrote show how his mind was tossed to and fro, in great indecision:

'When one gets behind the screen one finds that there is a skeleton-closet in every man's heart. Everybody has some trouble black enough and big enough for him. An honest heart and faith in God—if we have that we have all.'

'I am sore pressed,' he writes in his diary, 'all looks cloudy. Preached at Monimail on Christian Cross-bearing. I have been reviewing the past year here. Find to my horror and amazement that I was one hundred and thirteen days out of my parish doing other duty.'

'What a peck of troubles I am in. Desirous to stay

here; there are multifarious and multitudinous strings that would draw me to Glasgow—more work to do for God and for God's Church, more service to show when the last account is given in.

'I shall have a good deal of business to do in St. Andrews, and should, moreover, have pleasure in showing you the identical bells which I was in the habit of ringing by way of exercise in the evening in the days of yore, the walls we used to descend by moonlight, the lamp-posts which I frequently denuded of their covering, the houses where I lodged, etc. etc.

'A letter from Dugald to-day, the last for months to come. He has four hundred under his care, and already there have been broken legs and eyes put out, so that his hands are full.

'Had a tête-à-tête last night with an authoress, who was not old, not ugly, not a blue-stocking, but a very pleasant, conversable lady, by name, Miss Keddie, and by *nom de plume*, Sarah Tytler. She writes novels for *Good Words*, and is at present visiting one of the wealthy farmers of this neighbourhood.

'How much more real to a man, as an immortal being, is his love for his wife! How much more pure and ennobling than the dress which covers his body, the food he eats, the chairs he sits on, or the house which covers him. These do not form part of him; they are outside him; they may leave him or he may leave them any day, but I do not see how the remotest age of eternity can ever efface human affection from the heart on which its simple record has been written. Fools joke about the holiest feelings God ever put into the human heart, form the tie of love lightly and as lightly break it, make life a merry pastime or a pantomime, and forget that there is a grave at the end of it. For God's sake let us be earnest in whatever we do or say in this world.

'To be free from all sorts of night fears is as much *habit* as *constitution*. I have often been amused with Grace's account of some lonely winter nights spent at Lindifferon when I was from home, and when darkness set in at four o'clock. They used to bolt and bar the doors and make ready for retreat.

'On one of these occasions—a wild winter's night—when the servant and she were going off to bed, they dis-

tinctly heard a man's footsteps moving cautiously round the house as if he were trying the windows. There was no doubt of it. Every footfall was distinctly heard on the crisp ground, in the dead silence of the night. I would have liked to see their faces at that moment. Their remedy was to sleep in one room.

'That fact—the need of human companionship—would make a capital text if one felt inclined to moralise. There is nothing the human heart so much dreads as the thought of being utterly alone. I have felt it when walking about amid the surge and roar of London. To think of these dense masses of human beings utterly cut off from you makes you feel as if you were in the midst of perfect solitude.

'It is the thought of utter loneliness which gives its power and pathos to Hood's *Bridge of Sighs*! You remember the picture of the poor unfortunate standing alone on the bridge on that wild March night.

'The lines are among the most mournful ever penned. I learned them many long years ago from the lips of a Scone weaver, before I had ever heard of such a man as Hood. The sentiment of *loneliness* gives them their power.

'It is the same sentiment that gives its awfulness not only to Christ's death but to all death—that we must all leave the world *alone*; as de Quincey says: "King and priest, warrior and maiden, philosopher and child,—all must walk those mighty galleries alone."

'We all like to have a human hand in ours and a human heart beating for our own, at least, in the great crises and troubles of life. There is One, the Friend that sticketh closer than a Brother, who has promised that He will never leave us, never forsake us, not even when heart and flesh do faint and fail. Let us seek a closer interest in Him, the Holy Lamb of God. It will brighten every joy God may give us in life. It will soothe whatever sorrow He may send us to know and feel that in Christ we have a Brother and a Friend.

'I could be eloquent and moral on the evils of the whole system of gulling, though sometimes rendered necessary in the unhappy and unfortunate state of society. I always *feel mean* when gulling. I have once or twice in my life approached the confines of a *fib consciously*. God forgive me! Perhaps fifty times unconsciously.

'I preach up more than anything else the necessity of leading honest, truthful, brave lives as the highest Christian life, and of being honest in thought, desire, word, and heart. We can hardly tell God all our frailties. It is difficult to pour out before Him all our littlenesses and meannesses and shams and failings—turn inside out that inner life which is our only true life, and regarding which "we are never less alone than when alone." So is it better to have no confessor. What a world it would be if every man and woman's soul were *transparent* like a bit of plate-glass, and you saw what was going on as plainly as you see those men in some shop-windows in Glasgow go through the mysteries of hat-making, or if everybody carried a mirror on his heart which had the faculty of letting everybody else see what was going on within. I suspect it would not do at all. I very much fear it would make this smiling, canting, gulling, humbugging world a little hell, the sooner we got out of which the better.

'They say that no nobleman is noble to his valet, so reticence in its deepest sense is God's law for this world. The horrible thought is—It will all come out some day. With some, the comforting thought is—"There is *now* (and there will be hereafter) *no condemnation* to them who are in Christ Jesus." My creed is, there is no judgment to the believer, the thorough Christian, no revelation at last of the hideous evils he has done. Blood has washed them out for ever.

'My pen has followed my thoughts as they have arisen spontaneously. Hence the above lucubrations. But pray do not fancy me a devil because I thus write. I believe that I am better this day than I was this day last year, or any year of my life. I believe that I have got one foot on the ladder "which slopes through darkness up to God." Pray that I may keep it.'

'*Sept.* 7, 1863.

'This is how I have been spending the day. Was knocked up at 8.30 precisely, and rose precisely at 10!!! Breakfasted on the herrings, which were splendid. Read the ninth chapter of Mark in Greek, and enjoyed it very much, spending a whole hour in comparing the narrative with Matthew and Luke. Read through a page or two of Homer. Read the papers. Had my forenoon pipe, and

was settling down to a great sermon, when in stepped Mr. Henderson *en route* for Dunbog on a visit to Mr. Edgar. As that is a duty which I should have performed some time ago, and as my neck may still be believed to be sore from my unhappy suspension in that parish, I thought that a visit to the scene of my execution might prove beneficial to my jugular.

'We, therefore, sallied forth along the road which leads to the Ladies' Bower. We both lighted our pipes. Beneath the trees we took shelter from a fierce shower of rain, which seemed sent as a punishment for polluting with the foul breath of the Virginia weed the pure atmosphere.

'The shower passed away; the sun shone out in meridian brightness, and beneath the benign influence of his beams we pursued our pleasant way. The conversation was, I must admit, of the abstrusest kind. My friend Henderson is thoroughly introspective, thoughtful, studious to a degree, and a day with him is therefore a day spent to some purpose.

'Suffice it to say that among other subjects which shared our conversation were these: fusion of churches, the inducements and impediments thereunto; the probable effects of the approaching amalgamation of the F.'s and U.P.'s on the spiritual condition of the country; the beauty of Fife as contrasted with other countries (originating, I should observe, in a distant but most exquisite view of the majestic Tay as it winds past Clatchart Crag, with the Sidlaw and Grampian Hills stretching beyond); the harvest prospects, and the current price of grain, and the probable effects of foreign produce upon the Fiars prices; the rank of women in the scale of creation, originated by the sight of some reapers in the barley-field, with sundry other political and economical as well as ecclesiastical questions of very vital importance to the country. On the last-named subject, viz., the rank of women, my friend entertained and advanced what I cannot help calling most erroneous and most outrageous views. These views it was my humble effort to rectify, as far as lay in my power and province. To assert, as he boldly did, that the great wish of woman was to get married was a libel on the sex. Although he urged many strong and plausible arguments in support of his position, it was my privilege to show that it was altogether untenable. "Why," I said, "how many brave and beautiful lives do you find

spent by old maids? May not women as well fulfil her appointed part unmarried as man? Does she not in point of fact do so? How comes it, if the universal wish of woman be to get married, that so many have honourably refused offers because with their hand they felt they could not give their heart?"

'And thus with argument we beguiled the way, till we reached the celebrated farm of Dunbog, tenanted by Mr. and Miss Ballingall, Free Churchers, and the best friends Mr. Edgar has in his parish. The farm-house, which looks more like the stately mansion of the Lord of the Manor than the abode of a tiller of the soil, is very pleasantly situated at the base of the fertile hills which separate Dunbog from the illustrious parish of Monimail. Here we paused to rest our weary limbs as well as to pay our respects to the host and hostess. The road from our present position to the tenement presently occupied by the Reverend incumbent was not familiar to us, and fearing to trust our sacred persons to the tender mercies of reapers, who might not hesitate to perform in actual fact the operation of Benzie on one whom in imagination they had already hanged, we deemed prudence the better part of valour, and therefore paused to make inquiry as to the right direction to Higham, commonly pronounced Heichham, which was the goal or *ultima thule* of our journey. Here we learned that the learned gentleman had gone to Edinburgh to superintend the correction of the press in the forthbringing of certain sermons, which are to strike with wonder and amazement those who are studious in such matters.

'On our return two incidents befell us. The first was the salutation of some reapers in the harvest-field, not, alas! like that of Boaz to Ruth in the barley-fields of Bethlehem, but a craving like that of the modern Hibernian beggar for an alms—a harvest gift. On the solemn assurance that the money would be expended on *tea*, I bestowed one shilling coin of the realm upon the Amazons, while my friend gave the liberal sum of 10d., fourpence of which he borrowed from your correspondent, and which I expect to be paid on that coming day which in this part of the world is fitly designated as the Morn-Come-Nevermas.'

'*Sept.* 18, 1863.

'I have a letter to-day, which says, "Nothing has been done in the Tron since the overtures to you were unsuccess-

ful. That matter was badly managed, and I suspect you were rather misunderstood. Had you come you could have made the living what you liked, as swarms from the neighbouring congregations were on the wing ready to take up the seats. You had to do with curious and I daresay you would think with rum men, which gave you an unfavourable impression. Dr. Boyd, and I believe the Provost, desire you yet. If some judicious man would take matters in hand you should be minister of the Tron, as every man in Glasgow says that no other known man will suit."

'My sermon to-day was from the first chapter of Colossians: "Christ in you the hope of glory"—a splendid subject most inadequately handled. Would to God that hope had a more powerful and permanent influence on all our lives.

'Have got up this morning cranky and out of humour, and have to post away into Cupar to that abomination of abominations, a meeting of heritors, to consider estimates. What a blessed estate is that of woman, to be free of all these troubles of life. All last night I was dreaming uncomfortable, horrid dreams. What nonsense does pass through one's brains in these silent night hours! I have put myself into a good frame of mind by reading that awful chapter, 14th of Mark, and by seeing my mother sitting beside me. You will likely see in the papers of to-day the very sudden death of a cousin of my father's, Captain Mac Gregor of Perth, one of the very oldest officers of his time—a fine, hearty old man, whose acquaintance I am sorry I did not cultivate so much as the others. *Requiescat in pace!*

'A still, calm, heavenly night; a Sabbath night with peace and rest in every cloud-flake that flits across the sky. The light has just left us, and the noisy crows are settling down to sleep. There is true poetry in such a night as this, and I only wish that its peace in rich fulness may have settled down on your spirit.

'May all good angels be around your pillow. May they seal your eyelids. May He who is their Father and our Father, their God and our God, encircle you with His own everlasting arms, and make you glad according to the days wherein He has afflicted you, and the years wherein you have seen evil.'

CHAPTER VI

FROM EAST TO WEST

1863-1864

'There passed us a woman with the west in her eyes—
And a man with his back to the east.'

CHILL October came with its fiery finger on the leaves of the forest, and it brought to the minister of Monimail the most trying period of his life. The doubts and fears which assailed him he has told in his own words:

'The beginning of October 1863 was fraught with as much anxiety as had been October 1862. On both occasions my whole soul was engrossed with the thought of Helen. At the one season I won her, and we became engaged, and at the other I so far lost her, and she was compelled by the state of her health to leave for the south of England. *L'homme propose, mais Dieu dispose.* On the former occasion I had just left a church, on the latter I was being pressed to take a new charge.

'My anxious desire for long has been that Helen should try the effect of what a thorough change of air will do for her. My coming to Monimail was solely owing to that, though she did not know it, that she might have the benefit of purer air and a simpler life, and also that she could be near Glasgow! Alas! how short-sighted we are!'

He consulted the doctors as to her state of health, and as to the climates of the east and the west of Scotland. He was assured that with people of a consumptive tendency it made very little difference where they resided, and that it was only a question of delaying the progress of the disease.

During this week of misery and doubt yet another deputation came to him from the Tron Church, and put the

pressing question: 'Did he still adhere to his former resolution and the terms on which he would consent to go there?' It was probably on this occasion that the indignation of the parishioners at the thought of losing their minister, whom they had learnt to value more deeply than he knew, was fully roused. The farmer who drove them to the manse, when he learnt who were the occupants of his machine, and what was their errand, uttered a saying which was long quoted in Monimail, and abides among the many anecdotes which surround the personality of 'the Doctor': 'If I had kent the business they were on, I wud a' whomelled them i' the ditch.' The deputation got for their answer that the minister of Monimail saw no reason to change from his former decision. His thoughts were not with them or their errand. The result of another medical opinion was conveyed to him, and he held a consultation with Helen's doctor. They all took a grave view of her condition, and agreed that they were averse to permitting an immediate marriage. On the 11th October a year of their betrothal had passed, and he had to face a future charged with forebodings, and the necessity of prolonged separation lay before him. Mr. Mac Gregor honestly notes all that was said on the matter. His own health had had a tendency to the same weakness, and the marriage was pronounced one that might have many grave consequences. To break off his engagement was a course, he said, he neither could nor would contemplate.

'What the upshot may be, God only knows. To His will I bow submissively. If I understand myself aright, I am placing Helen and myself, her concerns and mine, wholly in His good hands, assured that whatever turns out will be for our welfare here and hereafter. I buoy myself up with hope that she may revive, but I would be cheating my own heart and intellect were I to doubt the probable result.'

Mercifully his capacity for believing and hoping all things did buoy him up through the long years which lay before him, and he turned to help Helen through the present immediate trial. The marriage was to be postponed, and

the doctors decreed that for her the winter must be passed in the south of England. It fell to him to break these tidings to her. The family were home-abiding people. Rarely had she and her sisters moved farther than to some seaside resort by the Clyde, at Lochgoilhead or Kilcreggan.

One of the elders in the High Kirk once wrote to the minister he was thankful to be back from all the discomforts of a seaside holiday, and to find himself again in the familiar scenes of Paisley. An exile to the Isle of Wight did not attract one who had hoped to have a home of her own amid the scenes and interests in which she had been reared. As Mr. Mac Gregor told her the verdict of the doctor, he says :

'For the first time I saw tears in Helen's eyes. The thought of leaving home for six months chiefly presented itself to her mind. We joined in prayer, and I commended her to God and His guardian care. Never by look or symptom or word have I indicated to Helen my suspicion and foreboding. Is this right? May God have pity on us, and in His sovereign mercy spare her, and grant that she may yet be mine! May this cup pass from me ; nevertheless not my will but Thine be done!'

After this decision he felt his outlook on life changed. The inducement to remain at Monimail operated no longer, and there seemed no reason to resist the call from the congregation of the Tron. His friends pressed him to return to a city charge. They told him it was the sphere which best suited him, and that it was also for the good of the Church. He himself, absorbed in one thought, felt very indifferent on the matter ; but he finally decided, if his terms were agreed to, that he would accept the call to be the assistant and successor of Dr. Boyd in the Tron Church.

In October he saw Helen and her mother off from Edinburgh on their journey to the south of England, while he returned to his charge at Monimail with no immediate prospect of being able to see those on whom his thoughts and hopes were centred.

'It is a grand though a grim old doctrine that of our

Scottish Calvinism, "If it is to be, it is to be,"' and with this stern comfort he took up his winter's work and his correspondence with Helen before she left Paisley.

'MONIMAIL, *Oct.* 14, 1863.

'I feel a kin' o' queer, if not a kin' o' confused, at being away from you. It seems quite natural to me that you should be sitting here instead of stitching away in Paisley, in view of a migration southwards, like a bright and beautiful bird of passage on wing for a warmer clime. There is one comfort, neither rivers, nor oceans, nor latitude, neither time nor eternity can separate hearts that are knit together closely. That I believe, and in that hope I shall live and die. I hope to claim as mine in the great world of the future those whom I call mine in this. I should go well-nigh mad but for that hope. We are but bairns here, the best of us, and at our best we don't know what is good for us. Toys please us, and toys that would hurt us our Heavenly Father takes from us. You don't know how much I want to school myself into the right and true belief that God has sent this trouble upon you and me, not because He hates us, but because He loves us and tries to make us better by it. For God hates nothing that He has made. What He does, He does in kindness. If, therefore, He chooses to send early trouble on you, and He has done so, He has done all this for some wise and good purpose of His own. As in His presence I say it as my firm belief that this has come upon you because God loves you, and wants you to love Him more than you have ever done, and that it may be said of *you* hereafter as of a mighty multitude more, "These are they who came out of great tribulation and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." These words don't drop from my pen as part of my stock-in-trade. They are the deep, earnest convictions of my heart. None but God and His dear Son and the Holy Spirit love you more purely or more strongly than I do. I wish I could answer at last for everything as honestly as I can for my wish for your happiness here and evermore.'

'*Oct.* 27.

'It is almost all fixed about the Tron. The congregation have unanimously nominated me to the Council, so if there is no dispute about the terms, I go. I have to sit down and

break the news of my leaving to Lady Elizabeth. How am I to excuse myself?'

'*Oct.* 28, 1863.

'Who do you think is sitting beside me with a volume of Walter Scott in his hand (for shame!)—who but my worthy, red-cheeked father? He has had a day to spare from his drudgery, and popped in upon us quite "unexpected and promiscuous"—seventy-six years of age, a little deaf, but otherwise hale, hearty, vigorous, with ten years of life in him yet, if God will. May His best blessing descend on the good old man! He tells me that Dr. Boyd (of the Tron Church) is just *two* years older than he. Sydney Smith used to point to an old bishop, saying, "Do you see that man? He has lived to be eighty years, and yet he calls himself a Christian." My father sends you his blessing. It will do you no harm. It is coupled with the less influential blessing of his son.

'I have been reading Mrs. Oliphant's *Life of Edward Irving*, got from Lady Anna, and am very much interested in it. What a marvellous man he was! A giant in mind and moral power as well as body, and yet for years, despite his towering eloquence and commanding genius, he was unappreciated, misunderstood, unsuccessful. Fancy a man like Irving ten years a poor probationer, and glad to get humble work to do as a missionary in St. John's. Upon my word, moths like myself should be thankful when we consider the early success God has given us and the weary waiting which He gave to him. And yet his early trials helped to make him. He had just one overmastering fault—vanity!! His love-letters to his wife are models—breathing, as they do, most fervent piety and the most impassioned affection. This letter must come to a close. I commend my dear exile to the wanderer's Friend, whose gentle care I pray may be around her this night and for evermore. Good angels watch over her all the night through, and when rosy morning rises from the sea and peeps through the windows of Gladstone Cottage, may the soft kiss of her ruby lips waken her up to a happy day.

'I have had a heavy but very pleasant week's visiting. Think of yesterday, reading twenty-four chapters and giving as many prayers in as many houses. Everywhere in town and country parochial visitation does great good, especially

among the poorer classes. You can, by a little kindness to themselves and their bairns, get near their hearts, and, having made your way, can then speak to them about their eternal interests with some hope that, under the blessing of God, the word spoken may benefit them. I visit all houses without distinction, Free Kirk and United Presbyterian as well as my own, and try everywhere to leave a good word behind. One good effect at least follows. It binds them more closely to church attendance. It is always a sign of spiritual decline when people give up the habit of church-going.

'I have looked at the catalogue of books. I am free to confess that a larger amount of undiluted trash I have rarely seen. Ryde in its moral and intellectual atmosphere seems to be of a very unhealthy character. A good novel now and then is a good thing; but novel-reading as a regular rule and practice is about as dangerous a thing as I know. For one thing it induces a slovenly, slipshod habit of reading —reading without thinking, which creates a distaste for really serious and useful books. The only two valuable books in the catalogue are *Guizot* and *Lamartine*, the former very interesting, the latter somewhat stiffish, but excellent. Many of the novels which I have marked, you will have read. Read *John Halifax*. It is a thoroughly sound and sensible book. Both Smedley and Reade write well. *Never too Late to Mend* is a thrilling story overdrawn. My last was by a masterly hand, *My Novel*, by Bulwer Lytton. What a magnificent painter he is, and what a grasp of fine massive English! Read Charlotte Brontë's *Life* if you have not done so. If Irving's *Life* is in your library, I would advise you to try it. It is the record of a truly honest and noble life, lived very close to God.

'Oh! how it puts one to the blush to read of such lives spent so entirely in the service of Christ, and then to contrast one's own, so cold and loveless and careless! The good Lord give us all grace to live closer and closer unto Him, and to grow in faith and all Christian virtue as we grow in days and years!

'Talking of books—for a real substantial one that will stand more than one perusal and improve upon acquaintance, commend me to that old one, the Bible. Much though we hear about it, it isn't half known at the present day.

'A man has no name to the title of scholar who doesn't

know something of *Horace* and *Virgil*; why should he have it, who doesn't know anything of a nobler writer than either—Paul of Tarsus? I can't tell you how much I enjoy that morning chapter with you, following you most punctually in the noble Greek tongue which Paul spoke and wrote. These chapters of the Romans are most marvellous—the closest reasoning, the most subtle argument, the most graphic writing. What a flood of light streams in upon the page when you have the Greek before you and such a guide as Alford, Dean of Canterbury, to lead the way! So long as the world lasts there will always be the need of an educated class of men to unfold that best of books. Alas! for myself and my brethren! we haven't half pondered it in the original. The chapter of this morning, Romans vii., is worth all the novels ever written. But it is execrably translated, there being nasty words in the translation which shouldn't be there.'

'MONIMAIL, *November.*

'With a good fire on, the thermometer stands at 50°. The night before last was a fearful night of wind. It was glorious to hear it, not whistling but yelling and warring through the trees; lifting up masses of leaves and dashing them furiously against the window-panes. They who rise earlier than I, found the ground covered with snow. I suspect that winter has set in. Last year about this time, after some days of truly Indian summer, winter plumped right down upon us without giving a moment's warning, and we have now deep snow.

'Outside, snow, snow, nothing but snow—white, glazing, glistering snow. We plunged yesterday by one mighty leap from summer into the depths of winter — building operations stopped. Carts with ploughmen's furniture, robin red-breasts, bare trees—such is the prospect before the eyes of your snowed-up friend.'

The offer of the Tron Church was renewed and accepted in November, and the minister-elect writes to Helen of his first appearance:

'Within a dingy church in the busy heart of a mighty city a congregation has met for worship. There is a slight movement in the audience as a man of small dimensions mounts the pulpit-steps. Can *that* be the unanimous

choice of this people? whispers one stranger to another. All eyes are turned to the preacher with the pale face of a dirty yellow. The white bands tremble on his breast as with stentorian voice and lungs he gives out the psalm.'

'MONIMAIL, *Nov.* 1863.

'Last night, when out at my library meeting, was one of the most beautiful I ever witnessed. Have you any, even dim, remembrance of the avenue of trees that leads from the kirk to the manse? Fancy a brilliant sky overhead, lit up into something like meridian splendour by a most silvery moon: a long vista before you, chequered by lines of light, every branch and twig of the trees wrought into exquisite drapery upon the road—a web of silver.

'In the weary wilderness of the past one does remember pleasant green spots here and there—oases verily! When I become a Right Reverend Father in God I shall make them my resting-places in the path of life. But while memory goeth eastward, hard fact and reality point westward. What wonders the future holds in its womb! These changes are far from pleasant, but a certain class of people, the proverb says, are fond of them!'

'MONIMAIL, *Nov.* 21, 1863.

'Have got my visiting or visitations all over—a matter of great thankfulness in more ways than one; for the homes of the poor reveal much sorrow which should make one contented with his lot and thankful to God for abounding mercies. Just think of this as the experience of my last day's visit: first house, mother confined to bed; second, a young man, the last but one of a large family, posting on to the grave; third, a young girl was believed to have poisoned herself as the result of injured love; fourth, the corpse of an old saint lying in its coffin; fifth house, the young father of a young family under a trouble from which he has no hope of recovery; seventh, a young man, his eyesight gone, lying dangerously ill from inflammation of the lung; eighth, an old man for years an invalid; ninth, mother a widow, who has struggled to bring up her family in respectability, and rewarded by her oldest son, who should have been her prop and stay, going to the devil; twelfth, old Nelly doubled up with age and rheumatism, but glad of heart and firm of faith; thirteenth house, a young, good-looking woman bedridden and pained for two years, and

sinking fast. I have not overcoloured one bit the facts. If that were a fair sample of human life what a miserable thing it would be, and how vastly would the evil seem to overbalance the good! It is a difficult question to decide whether the good or the ill preponderates. There is just one great fact that explains all this mystery of love, unravels this twisted skein of life—the fact of immortality.

'"The dream used to be from God," but that day I suspect is past, although occasions may and certainly do arise when the Father of Spirits speaks to his children in dreams and visions of the night.

'As to houses in Glasgow—so far as I remember I have no pleasant recollections about Pollokshields. Don't somehow like the locality, but that doesn't matter if *you* like it. It has a kin' o' Paisley connection, from which one would like, in my circumstances, to get free. Besides, aren't the houses infested with rats? Doesn't the beastly canal, stinking night and day, summer and winter, pass right in front of it? Aren't there rising manufactories of starch and candles everywhere about? *Nous verrons!!*

'I have been reading an article on "Strong-minded Women" in Fraser, and I owe the writer a debt of thanks for coming forward in a sturdy way as the champion of a much-abused class. He shows that your strong-minded woman is the gentlest and the best and the most full of the milk of human kindness, and that the common idea of their being gorgons or chimeras is all bosh. For my own part I see no reason why a strong head should be incompatible with a sound heart. A woman without a heart is certainly the nearest approximation to a fiend; a woman without a head is the nearest approximation to, nay is altogether, a fool. Better perhaps to have the latter than the former; but a desperate pity to have either.'

At Christmas-time Mr. Mac Gregor felt free to go to Ventnor, and he stayed there till New Year's day. The winter had passed heavily to the two exiles, but there was a distinct improvement in the health of the invalid, and with renewed hopes the minister returned to finish his work in Monimail before taking up the charge of the Tron. Writing after he reached Fife, he says:

'After passing through that huge hulk of London, that

mighty desert, that weary wilderness, I had a long wait at King's Cross. I'll not forget it in a hurry. It was the strangest New Year's day I ever passed, and certainly in one sense the saddest. It was what the Highlanders express more beautifully than any language I know, "La chis nach fhaic." The day that sees (two friends together) and shall see them (separate).'

'Thank God! there runs through His great universe a law called the Law of Compensation, and they who are denied one joy are perhaps blessed with a more liberal share of others.'

'There is but one reason now (it was otherwise once) why I could wish to be other than I am. Pages upon pages might be covered with the tale of thoughts and imaginings and bitternesses that were the daily bread of other years. They were inevitable, perchance, to the time long ago. They would be the last mark of littleness were they cherished now. "When I was a child, I thought as a child."'

The winter of 1864 was bitterly cold, the frost nearly as intense as in 1861. Early in January, leaving Fife under snow and with every loch frozen hard, his manse sitting-room with a temperature rarely above 50°, he went into the murk of Glasgow, to preach his trial sermons and study his new parish.

'I am sure your thoughts would wander in the direction of the Tron, where a poor young man from the country was exposing himself to the inspection of a thousand eyes. I took it, I am sorry to say, quite coolly. The old nervousness, the great spasm which at one time would have roused me into something like furious activity, had altogether gone; and I preached with much of the same coolness as to my small country congregation. Don't misapprehend me. There was no want of bodily vigour, nor, I hope, of mental earnestness in telling the message with which I came charged. But I wanted the feeling of novelty, the feeling that I was taking the first step in a serious and awful responsibility, for which may God in His great mercy ever fit me, giving me, and I ask no more, those three things—a fearless faith in Himself, His love, and protection; a fearless adherence to truth and duty; and a fearless disregard of human opinion and of all consequences.

'On the whole I think I 'll like it. There will be plenty of room for steady and dogged work. Comfort, rest, ease, indolence are not good for us, if we have too much of them in this sphere. My motto is, "Do what good work you can, and get well out of it."

'A small incident took place at the close of the forenoon service yesterday, which raised a smile on the face of some. In turning round the Bible (vehemently, I suppose), just at the last sentence of the sermon, I pitched the Psalm-book down on the precentor's nose.'

'GLASGOW, *Jan.* 24, 1864.

'Came back from church to-day in extremely bad humour, having preached uncommonly ill. It is very curious how different one is. In the forenoon I got on as comfortably and as pleasantly as I ever did in my life, and in the afternoon just the reverse. The place was packed: passages full: some who were late had to enjoy a walk in the green. But the horrible thing is, that I didn't preach as I should have done. I am giving you a bit of what you 'll get plenty of some day, venom at myself and all creation when I don't do my duty to God, His church, and myself.

'*En passant* the seats in the Tron are letting well; a U.P. councillor has taken sittings.'

Half a century had passed since the call of Chalmers from the parish of Kilmany to be minister of the Tron Church, Glasgow, and now a successor was on his way, destined to fill the Tron as it had never been filled since Chalmers left it, and the thoughts of the two ministers were alike in the glance that they cast forward and behind them.

Looking to the hills which bounded his peaceful valley, and waving his staff to them as if in mournful farewell, Dr. Chalmers said to a friend who was walking by his side, 'Ah, my dear sir, my heart is wedded to these hills,' and as he revisits his old parish twenty years later, he says, 'There was more tearing of the heart-strings at leaving the valley of Kilmany than at leaving all my great parish at Glasgow.' 'Keep me from vanity,' he says as he receives his call, and in July 1815 he writes of his admission as 'got over.' 'It was a pretty formidable thing. There were three chairs put in the middle passage before the pulpit. In coming out of

the door I had to shake hands with the people. Sometimes I got three hands in my loof at once.'

As Chalmers enters on the life and work of his charge, the same peculiarities of the social life strike him, and he describes them with the ponderous dignity which is in amusing contrast to the impetuous indignation of his successor. In their day, as in ours, there were the endless processions of baked meats at the funeral and the banquet, the same insistence of the attendance of the clergy at every committee, and at social and philanthropic functions called into being for the waste of time of ministers and laity.

Chalmers' description is before the era when sanitation had become the equal of godliness :

'This, sir, is a wonderful place ; and I am half entertained and half provoked by some of the peculiarities of its people. The peculiarity which bears hardest upon me is the incessant demand they have upon all occasions for the personal attendance of the ministers. They must have four to every funeral, or they do not think it has been genteelly gone through. They must have one or more to all the committees of all the societies. They must fall in at every procession. They must attend examinations innumerable, and eat of the dinners consequent upon these examinations. They have a niche assigned them in almost every public doing, and that niche must be filled up by them.

'I gave in to all this at first, but I am beginning to keep a suspicious eye upon these repeated demands, ever since I sat up nearly an hour in grave deliberation upon a subject connected with the property of a corporation, and that subject was a gutter, and the question was whether it should be bought or covered up, or let alone and left to lie open. I am gradually separating myself from all this trash.

'I long to establish it as a doctrine that the life of a town minister should be what the life of a country minister might be, that is, a life of intellectual leisure : his entire time disposable to the purposes to which the apostles gave themselves wholly, that is, the ministry of the word and prayer.'

'GLASGOW, *January* 1864.

'MY DEAR HELEN,—I have just come in from an exploring expedition round my new diocese. Well, first and

foremost, I am glad to say that on the testimony of my beadle, and on the evidence of my own eyes, I have got the wretchedest, foulest, immoralest corner of Scotland, nay of Great Britain. It is one mass of moral and physical filth, the worst, to use the forcible language of Hume, under the canopy above. It is bounded by the Trongate, the Saltmarket, Bridgegate, and a lane they call the Old Wynd, running from Mr. M'Coll's church in the Bridgegate up to the Trongate. This will give you some idea of its nature and its dimensions, an idea which must be strengthened by the additional information that it is intersected by those two delightful streets, King Street and Princes Street.

'So to sum up the whole matter, I like the prospect before us both. I like the horrid parish, for it is just the place where God's Gospel should do good. I like the church, a place of holy rest and quiet in the very midst of that seething sea of sin and devilry and bestiality which rolls eternally around it; the very steeple pointing up its finger, as if by protest, to that heaven which the breathing multitudes around it so fearfully forget.

'In my sermon to-day I quoted a brilliant passage from Caird, where he makes Christ die of that most piteous of all deaths, a broken heart. Human affection helps us in some small way to *rise* up to the conception of that great fact that Christ—loving poor sinful men with a strength of love compared to which my affection for you, deep though God knows it is, is but as a drop to the ocean—seeing around Him nothing but sin, getting no return for His great love but coldness and cutting neglect, died of a broken heart.

'These things are to me awful verities, dim revelations of something grander, nobler, better in that future state, where we shall see each other with a clearer eye, and love with a truer, larger heart. Love gives a man, so to speak, a higher pedestal, a platform from which to look up to the holy relationships of the future. He gets a better sight of them. All pure good things in this world are but the rudimentary forms, the types, the emblems, the shadows of something far better in the world to come.

'I know that the first month or two in the Tron will decide the question of success or otherwise during the entire period of our sojourn there. I wish, therefore, I were braced up for a little hard work here before I go, but the time is short, short. I trust I may go, with God's help, in the right

frame and spirit, looking on it as a great work which I have to do there for God and Christ, selfishness and self-seeking put away.'

In his diary he says:

'*January* 1864.—Home, my trials over. If anything would make me change my mind and remain, it would be the singular beauty of my parish contrasted with the dirt and din of Glasgow, but it is the right field. Oh God, purify me from all base and unworthy motives, and give me a single eye to Thy glory.'

He had to return to his 'beautiful home' and say farewell to it, and to many of the hopes which he had cherished as he entered into the parish of Monimail. To the last of his days his voice lingered on his name for that country parish, 'sweet Monimail,' and those who knew him could see that his eyes were resting on a vision of a land that was far away and very dear to him. 'I leave it for toil and drudgery, and uphill and perhaps unsuccessful work.' It was a trial to him to give up the peace of the beech-trees of Monimail, where, 'had I been fated to live under them, I think in a year or two I should have had the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament at my finger ends.'

'When going out to service to-day, with a cloudless sky overhead and an atmosphere of intense clearness around, the thought flashed through me, "You blockhead! isn't this the thing?" And then the quiet little congregation and the bonny wee church, and every face turned pleasantly on you. Isn't it nice? But then, on the other hand, there is the stir and life of a town, good for a fellow in this short transient day.

'There is the movement of fierce active life going on night and day: that roar of carts and carriages; that hum of living crowds, ceaseless as the roll and roar of an angry sea; that confusing, nerve-tingling din, which you know better than I can describe, and which irritates a young man from the country. And yet there is something grand in that endless flow of human life in a great city—something to stir one up to do brave, good work for perishing human souls.

'See! put out your forefinger and fancy a balance on it. Hanging to one end is Glasgow, hanging to the other is Monimail. Put an equal weight of nice, comfortable indolence, ease, rest, in either scale, and Monimail kicks the beam. Put in an equal amount of duty to God and to man, of real, manly life, and Glasgow comes down with a crash, the heavier and better article by far of the two.'

So he argued, swayed hither and thither by the conflicting tides of feeling, but for him the trumpet call had come, and his feet were again to tread the city ways. 'Believing as I do that preaching is God's instrumentality for the saving of souls, I may hope that something said may have gone home to their hearts.' That was his belief. When depressed at the thought of the seething mass of misery lying around the Tron Church, his inability to touch or lighten the conditions under which his people lived, he turns to the thought how he can best proclaim his message to the spiritually destitute around him.

'That parish of mine is beyond all hope of reformation in the way of visits, so that I must give my time mainly to that best of all ministerial work—the duties of the pulpit. To-morrow is the last of my trials, when I have a firm hope, with that help which one always gets when one asks for it, to preach better than I did before.'

In his belief that through him, and at that day and hour, he might be the instrument of bringing the good tidings to some individual soul, lay the vivid personal power of his great gift of preaching. That instrument entrusted to him he felt he should use, and that his work lay, not in the ease of life, but in strenuous preaching in the great city charges, and to the countless multitudes which thronged to his ministry.

'MONIMAIL, *Feb.* 1864.

'As cold water to a thirsty traveller ready to perish; as the first sight of his native hills to the weary and wounded soldier; as the blast of the battle trumpet in the war-horse's ear; as the thrill that goes through nature's heart as she welcomes the returning spring; as a great joy to a burdened

heart;—so has thy thrice welcome letter this morning been to me. I had some uneasy thoughts in connection with you, but they are all dispelled like the snows of last winter or the mist of the morning. A wee birdie out on the branches of the bare beech-tree has been whistling away at an eerie tune, the overture of which is always, "last February." It is a very plaintive note which I can't get out of my head.

'What a strange and divine mystery is the instinct of love! The most holy and most beautiful of our nature: chiefest ornament of humanity which has survived the wreck and ruin of the fall: which makes the sourest human heart sweet, and the gruffest temper gentle, and the hardest soul tender.'

'The Manse, Monimail, *Feb.* 1, 1864.

'I have got home in safety. What a luxury to breathe this fine, free, fresh air, to have one's own fire blinking bonnily, and one's own roof above one's head after that smoky, dirty, yet pleasant Glasgow.

'One of your onerous duties will be to break me of the evil habit of preaching too long. Just think of treating the Dons of the Presbytery to an hour on Thursday, and my poor people to an hour and a half to-day! I go into the pulpit every Sabbath with the strong determination to be brief. But somehow or other one gets, like a horse, into the spirit of the thing, and tugs and strains with might and main. The winged moments flit by with extraordinary rapidity, and the good resolution, like many more, is forgotten.

'We had a baptism, and the beadle, having omitted to put up the water, had to do so during the course of the service, and being like all country beadles rough in action although glib enough in tongue, he managed to make a desperate splutter, spilling three-fourths of the contents to the manifold delectation of the people, the Doctor leading the way in the titter. I got angry and told them to attend, which instantly quieted their risible nerves. The little fellow, admitted by the great mystery of Baptism within the visible Church of the Redeemed, rejoiced in the name of Robert Proud. A pretty little fellow, who behaved himself as became his name. The whole family of the shoemaker, his father, are distinguished by extraordinary beauty. I am sure I prayed earnestly that God would bless him and make him a blessing.'

'*Feb.* 5, 1864.

'This morning the thermometer in this room is 42°. Think of that and tremble. You with your hot sun and bright skies will have almost forgotten what snow and frost are.

'Well! if I ever! You, a dissenter, the daughter of a dissenter, and your brother an elder of a dissenting kirk, taking kindly to the Erastian Church of England! You will be coming home a rank Puseyite, a High Church-woman of the first water, your head filled with litanies and surplices and chants and chasubles, as the wife of the assistant of the Tron, to drive your unfortunate husband distracted with movements about the organ and kneeling and the liturgy. Well, I don't wonder at it a bit.

'There *is* something in the service of the Church of England, awanting in the balder and sterner service of our Scottish kirks, which appeals to the educated instinct of a refined and religious mind. We must not stupidly ignore *facts*, and the fact is, explain it how we may, that whenever a Scot gets acquainted with the English service he gets also attached to it, and ever after prefers it to his own. In this way we have lost irremediably and irrevocably the gentry of the land. If you and I live long enough I venture to predict that we shall witness a widespread movement among all the educated classes for something like a liturgy and a richer service than our own.'

'MONIMAIL, *Feb.* 1864.

'It was most gratifying to learn from Lady Anna yesterday that her mother and the others, however sorry they are at my going, could not but think the step a right one in the circumstances. She said they never believed that I would be long with them, but they did not expect I would be taken away so soon. Are they not noble-hearted ladies? God bless them, looking at this step in a large light and thoroughly justifying it. If they who are most deeply interested in my remaining here have no objections to my going, the world has nothing to do with the matter.

'So far as I can see and judge, there will be no *bitterness* in the parish at my changing this dear and delightful snuggery for the purlieus of the Saut Market and the inevitable drudgery of the Tron. The people here have not the lofty opinion of themselves and their deserts which

characterise to a considerable degree some congregations. And thus God has been kinder to me in this matter than I expected, having removed one great barrier in my way. To His name be praise.

'Here comes a black coat in the shape of an applicant, I declare! Bother! bother! a halo of sweetness is gathering round the pleasant parish now that I am likely to leave it.'

'*Feb.* 17, 1864.

'In the eyes of God and man your health is your first concern, and anything that tends to hurt it, is wrong and sinful. Take your trouble to God. Take it to your great and best Brother, Christ. Go down on your knees and tell Him all, pour it out before Him. Ask for His sympathy and His help. His promise is: "Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Remember that promise is as sure as the sky above you and the earth beneath you. There is no trouble too little for Him to sympathise with, too heavy for Him to bear.

'Last night Dr. Archibald called after the lecture. When I think of him I should have less alarm for you. Doctor though he is, he will persist in driving out in an open machine in the night air, with one of his lungs wholly consolidated. Of course he is wrong, and yet he has all his senses about him, and the wonder is—he is rapidly improving.'

'*The Holy Sabbath, Feb.* 21, 1864, 2 P.M. precisely.

'God can't be angry surely with a tendency which I have at this moment to throw up my hat on this day marked above as holy. He rejoices in His children's joy; is glad with their gladness. My present jubilant frame of mind is due to what, think you? Not to the fresh and beautiful mantle of snow, with which He hath this day covered the earth. (Our wee bit of it, I mean.) And such snow! I am not sure if you, poor city-bred girl, ever saw the like of it. Talk of snow at Ventnor, forsooth! a mere dribble to remind your northern soul that there is such a thing in existence. Not your Glasgow slush, one part virgin snow and three parts oozy slime; but real, honest, pure, happy snow, taking you up to the ankle; hanging heavily and brightly on the branches; pure in colour as a maiden's brow; bright as her joyous smile; decorating the earth with

a robe white as that which angels wear; or, to vary the metaphor, cleansing all its impurities as if its great, jolly, laughing, dirty face had been washed this Sabbath day. But it isn't the snow that makes me jubilant, nor is it the fact—quite true, I assure you—that I have just preached two great sermons to my very dear but very thin congregation, the one on the history of Joseph and the other on God's power and glory. Two hours and a quarter of incessant speaking, with an hour in the Sabbath School, don't usually leave a fellow in the most enviable mood. He rather feels like a hack horse that has been on the tramp all day, and has only the strength to neigh a nicker for corn.

'Yet the fact remains that despite good ground for sorrow, I am at this moment supremely happy. I have a lurking suspicion that the cause lies in a letter from you.

'What a pity Thackeray hadn't thought of writing a book on "Letters," their physiology and psychology. It would have been as good as that inimitable book *Vanity Fair*, which all young women should read over at least three times before they get married. Letters! What can't they do? How happy they can make you. How miserable! It's a poor boast of the pen that it can scratch out with a dash £10,000. It can do a great deal more than that. A few lines from it can go a great way in breaking or in mending poor human hearts.

'Got yours to-day in the session-house, but couldn't get it read owing to the mass of people whom the snow had sent in to thaw their toes at the session-fire, so was obliged reluctantly to put it in my pocket, with much the same feeling which prompts a school-boy to put some valuable article which nobody has but himself into his trousers. But I have had a feast of it now, and here record my thanks to God, the giver of all good, in that you are better, stronger, healthier in body and in mind. Letters do indicate to a certain degree one's state of feeling at the time. Although words were given, according to the witty Frenchman, to conceal our thoughts, unless in the case of a practised or professional trickster they can't very effectually do that. One can't write a happy letter if he is grumpy, nor a grumpy letter if he is happy. You say in your letter perhaps the sorrow was sent for good. And, in your previous letter, you wonder if "bodily ailments are sent us as a punishment for our sins." If the latter held true what

a strong, healthy, happy girl you would be. You, poor innocent, what do you know of the great seething wickedness there is in the world? No; ailments both bodily and mental are sent for our good, but not in the way of punishment. There is a great and good Father up in heaven who loves us better a great deal than we love ourselves, and that is saying much—a Father who has no pleasure in the groans and tears of his children, and who would like to see them all one day taken away. Sorrow exalts and purifies the character: sorrow makes us thoughtful and wise: sorrow brings us to lay our head on God's great heart, just as a weeping child will rush to a mother's arms and hide its tears and sorrows there.

'You in your pilgrimage have had more than the allotted share. But, remember this, that there has not been a feather's weight of it more than God saw would be good for you; and however hard to be borne, however weary, you have learned in this as in all things to say: "Thy will be done." In His own good time He will lift the weight that has oppressed you; lift the veil behind which you cannot now see, and show you how good and merciful He has been, even when your nature may have prompted the dark thought that He was not kind but cruel.

'You have often noticed after a dull morning, when all nature seemed drooping in sadness, how the sun suddenly broke through the clouds and restored her smile to nature, and how much more beautiful such a day has been, just owing to the dreariness with which it opened. Have you never noticed the same taking place in a human life? Your life's morning has been a somewhat troubled one; but let us both hope that the sun will soon break through and disperse all the clouds that have been hanging over you, and that your womanhood and age will be all the happier for the sorrows of your girlhood.

'With your long retentive memory you called up to my mind my sorrow at leaving my first love, Paisley. Like the sorrows of true love, men pass through that but once. The freshness of that spring never comes back again when it has gone. The human heart has a wonderful capacity certainly, but a sorrow keen as that with which it parts from a *first* congregation will never thrill it again. So I very much fear it will be a selfish sorrow with which I shall leave this bonny place. Short time though I have been in it, its trees and

braes and breezy uplands have twined themselves wonderfully round my heart. We get to love, I think, what we are accustomed to. To me God's fresh fair world is always beautiful. We talk away wonderfully as I stroll along. I tell it all I think, and it speaks back to me in its own kindly way. It never hurts me beyond a pelting shower now and then, which it sends to say that it can be angry if it likes; it never harms me. It says no ill and thinks no ill of anybody living, but is always ready rather to soothe and comfort and bless—if men would but open their eyes to see and their hearts to take in its goodness. How then can I help loving it?'

'MONIMAIL, 1864.

'My astonishment is vast at the picture of your mother detained and enchained with the *Idylls of the King*. I couldn't believe it. Have you read them? Do. In no language and in no literature which I know is there anything to match these same Idylls. In their way they are perfect. In purity of language and thought, in nobleness of aim, in elegance of diction they are altogether unrivalled. Read *Guinevere*:

> '"To lead sweet lives in purest chastity,
> To love one maiden only, cleave to her,
> And worship her by years of noble deeds,
> Until they won her; for indeed I know
> Of no more subtle master under heaven
> Than is the maiden passion for a maid,
> Not only to keep down the base in man,
> But teach high thought, and amiable words
> And courtliness, and the desire of fame,
> And love of truth, and all that makes a man."

'Aye! all that makes a man. What a noble picture of the results that flow from a pure, a "maiden" love. Read the Idylls from beginning to end.

'Yesterday we had a pleasant, bright, spring day. Oh! it was lovely. The crows, in obedience to the country rhyme,

> '"On the first of March
> The crows do search,"

have begun to build their nests. What a noise they do make in carrying on their love affairs! And yet there are few sounds I more like to hear. To-day, again, is much colder, and the voice of the singing-bird is hushed.'

'*Feb.* 29, 1864.

'Heigho! Here goes the last week of dear Monimail! Well, it brings up very vividly to recollection a similar week now reckoned in the long ago. How much you have suffered since then. I may well say: "Return, O Lord, how long, and let it repent Thee concerning Thy servant: make her glad according to the days wherein Thou hast afflicted her, and the years wherein she has seen evil."

'It breaks my heart to think of all you have gone through, and my only comfort is the thorough conviction that all will yet be well.'

'*March* 6.

'It 's my last Sabbath morning in Monimail. Time, 1.30 A.M. I have got my sermon completed. *It* has just occupied me since tea-time. Having gone through this before it is (like a second marriage) a comparatively easy matter.

'It is a solemn, a terribly solemn, step to break this same ministerial tie. I won't cry to-morrow, but I 'll feel a good deal. God give us all His grace to do our duty in the best way we can, and to do nothing of which we would be afraid to give account when we stand before God, the Master of us all. May Christ save us from all our sins, and in His unspeakable mercy deliver me from the guilt of souls in this place! Had I dreamt that I was to be here so short a time, there would have been no dancing about, lecturing for Jews, but doing sound missionary work in this same parish, and among the hard and godless hearts therein. Godless! that is the word. I fear—I fear that with many God is not in all their thoughts, and that eternity is to most of them a dream. Poor fellows, they follow horses all day. Horses are their companions, and the stiff earth their labour, and so they dream about horses, and get like what they think and dream about. And yet I feel a great deal could be made of them by visiting them in their homes at night, getting into their confidence, clapping their children on the head, and then lifting them up a little in thought above turnips and potatoes.

'I wish I had my year and a half to begin among them. "Too late! too late! ye cannot enter now."'

'The Manse, Monimail, *March* 8, 1864.

'Here goes my last scrap to you from Monimail. I have got everything ready, all my calls over, and have gone

through the crying scenes of parting as well as could be expected. I had no idea there was so much warm regard awakened during my short stay. Better this than the other way.

'We had an overflowing church on Sunday, though the day was fearful. The snow is half a foot deep. I leave this in an hour or two. Will spend the night at Spout-wells, and be in Glasgow some time to-morrow. The dear old parish! God bless every man and woman in it.'

CHAPTER VII

FROM TRON TO TRON

1864-1867

'Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might,
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, pass'd in music out of sight.'

'GLASGOW, ELMGROVE PL., *March* 11, 1864.

'THE "assistant" minister of the Tron Parish, Glasgow, and a citizen of that great city, writes to his most dearly beloved, wishing her health and happiness.

'Here I am as comfortable and contented in Mrs. S.'s lodgings as if I had been in them for five and thirty years. My room is not very large, but it is very neat and sweet and pleasant and quiet. Mrs. S. is a Highlander, and belongs to the most straitest sect of the Pharisees, the Covenanters. When she heard of a minister coming to take lodgings with her the text came into her mind, "And the Lord blessed the House of Obededom for David's sake."

'I got comfortably through the important proceedings of yesterday. The service was at two, Mr. Stewart of St. Mark's the inducting minister. There was a very large attendance, and there was a very cordial welcome at the close, when I thought my arm would be wrung off. We have a rare day here. Rare, did I say?

'Alas! only too frequent, just such a day as your Glasgow has an unhappy tendency to produce: dark as evening twilight; rain splashing wearily on the streets; sky, none; in its place a concave canopy of lead of a homogeneous colour and thickness throughout from the zenith to the horizon of the chimney-cans, and so dark that I have had to go to the window to mend this pen. Yes, it would be a nice subject at this moment to write an article on the characteristic features and feelings of town and country life. I suspect

the balance would be in favour of bonny Monimail and those dear green fields of Fife.'

'GLASGOW, *March* 14.

'The Tron Church was crammed to overflowing, albeit the day was bad. We had the Provost and magistrates in all the majesty of their gold chains, occupying the front of the gallery in the forenoon, when we had a most eloquent sermon from Mr. Stewart, and also this afternoon. This is something new. Stewart bowed to them, but they had not expected anything of the kind, for they did not return it. They paid attention to my prostrations, and made deep obeisance in return. Thank God I got on no' that ill. I have been visiting my flock from noon till late afternoon, and got over a great deal of ground. I am quite delighted with the class of people I have to deal with. I am thankful for this day's work. I mean to be at it again to-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow, till I know them all.'

'GOOD FRIDAY, *March* 26, 1864.

'You have doubtless been present at the celebration of the great Christian Fast, and heard a sermon somewhere in Ventnor? I suppose it has been a great day with you. What ghouls we Scots are not to remember gladly as *you* English do the great cardinal events of the Christian story, and specially of the Master's life.

'I was away yesterday at a typhus fever funeral, and didn't care to go near your sister on return. It seems to be very bad midway up East George Street. The woman whose funeral I was at to-day I saw last week without a particle of fever on her. Her husband's brother died yesterday of the same dread pestilence, and in the neighbouring land to where I was to-day there are five labouring under it.

'*Easter Day.*—The church was full with a most respectable and most attentive audience, on whom I inflicted, as usual, a service much too long. It 's a positive disease which I can't get the better of. Most thorough sympathy have I with the prolixity of the great and good and departed Dr. Robertson, who, when commanded to preach before the Queen, was urged by his friends to preach a short sermon. "With God's help," he replied, "I 'll try and keep within the hour."

'So Ventnor is looking lovely and almost summerlike, these bonny primroses telling of bright skies and warm suns.

It makes one's heart glad to think of. Such an actual prospect to the eye as *I* have at this moment—a tall chimney-stalk rising out of a sea of smoke. For all that, a city life has some small inducements over a country one for any person possessed of a little surplus steam. It is a life of more hardness, more care, more trouble and worry; but it is a life of more serviceableness to God and to the Church, and *that* after all is the great thing for every man and woman. To do some work in this planet before we leave it, and as much and as good as we can, is the great law for us mortals. It is not much treasure we can lay up in store against the coming day of account. We should lay up as much as we can.'

The interior of the Tron Kirk remains to-day practically what it was in the days of Chalmers and Mac Gregor—semi-circular in shape, with one deep gallery, a pulpit of large dimensions, and for the rest a sordid plainness reigning over all. The curious feature is the wide inside passage running round the church, which became so thronged with the people waiting to get seats, that in Chalmers' day, on one occasion, the mere pressure of the crowd burst open, with a loud noise, the door which had been closed until the regular seat-holders had been accommodated.

The 'assistant' was on the happiest terms with Dr. Boyd, who had the most ungrudging delight in the new order of attendance in the Tron. Writing of an early interview with his principal, he says: 'He is a most pleasant man, with an immense amount of life in him. He gratified me with the assurance that from the moment of my induction he entirely withdrew from control of affairs.' Dr. Boyd's son, the well-known 'A. K. H. B.' of St. Andrews, had written to his father's assistant and successor of his pleasure at his acceptance of the charge. 'I suppose in a very few weeks you will take the reins into your young and vigorous hands. I anticipate for you a career of distinguished success and eminence in the important position you are to hold. I heartily hope and believe that you will never have cause to regret being tempted away from your beautiful country parish to the bustle of town life again.'

His preaching was much on his mind, and probably it never was at a higher level of earnestness than in the Tron Church. His correspondent in the Isle of Wight got a little wearied of the subject, and he pleads: 'Is it not honest at least just to write as I would speak to you? The sermons happen to be uppermost at this moment. I would like much to have a small stock of decent ones by me to begin with in the Tron. I find that distraction in any form is not conducive to composition. Things will roll through the head when they should rest. The sermon to-day was poor so far as a telling effect upon an audience is concerned. The preaching of it produced anything but a good impression upon the preacher himself, a pretty sure symptom that the same effect has been produced upon the audience.'

The relation between him and the congregation was a living one. If the pews were full of poppy-heads, the fountain of his inspiration dried up; or if it did not, he spoilt his natural, sympathetic outpourings by efforts to rouse and enchain their interest. This did not often happen, and he held the attention enthralled, even through those overlong sermons, which he deplored so often as an overmastering sin.

There were many who thought that his preaching came to him without study and without work. These should have spent a week with the preacher in his study and they would have learnt the open secret, that what appears the most spontaneous utterance is the result of work so concentrated that at length the subject becomes inwrought with the whole being, and then in his case the spirit gave utterance. 'Sermons are written to be preached, not to be published,' he would say, and though he wrote and annotated in a manner which could have gone to the press as the pages lay before him, he never would accede to the request that he should publish his sermons. He read widely in support of the sustained arguments which were always the bones of the sermon. 'Spent a heavenly morning with my books,' was an entry in the diary, as peaceful as the sentiment was the reverse of heavenly when he was

interrupted by the insistent callers, which he found even a country parish supplied.

In settling to his new work Mac Gregor, as usual, found his people of the best and the surroundings all that he could wish. He had been glad 'to leave the stench of Paisley,' and when at Monimail had written: 'What a change a year does make in one's feelings! I could hardly realise that seven of the best years of my life were spent in that dirty yet dearly beloved town.'

Chalmers had found annoyance 'in the want of seasoning to the air and climate of Glasgow. The frost has an opposite effect to what I was counting on. It condenses the smoke of the public works and sends it down in the form of darkness visible'—a sufficiently laborious description of the horrors of a Glasgow fog. The new minister of the Tron had a shorter way of dealing with the atmosphere. 'I shall go out for a little Glasgow air—air? Gas, I mean!' To him, as to Chalmers, 'the darkness visible' that really affected them, and made them feel the close and noisome atmosphere a small trouble in comparison, was the squalor and godless ignorance of the parish, of whose area and its inhabitants the new minister in his letter to Helen had drawn so vivid a picture. To them, at fifty years' interval, the steeple of the Tron Church was the silent, reproachful witness of the only power which could raise and heal the fallen and degraded people in the dark wynds and lands of St. Mary's parish. There lay the work put to their hands, and the apostolic succession had the same indwelling spirit, the same belief that if Glasgow were to flourish it was 'by the preaching of the Word.'

To one who asked Mac Gregor in the zenith of his power what were the things which stood behind his preaching, the answer was characteristically descriptive of what was felt by every listening hearer of his ministry: 'All through, from the beginning, I have tried to be true to my colours—preaching Christ and Him crucified. The rock of my faith is the eternal Sonship of the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. All flows from that. Religion without that is a pithless,

marrowless concern. On that I rest my own eternal hopes; on the work done for me; on Christ as the Redeemer of men; the love of God in sending His Son, in giving Him as a sacrifice for the sins of the world; the love of Christ in executing His Father's loving purpose; and the love and power of the Holy Ghost in applying the benefits which Christ secured for us.'

These doctrines he never preached with bated breath. 'The clarion voice gave no uncertain call.' A herald charged with a direct commission, he might fitly have begun and closed every one of his sermons with the words, 'Thus saith the Lord.'

Heritors, as a rule, can boast no good name in the present and none in past history. Half the ugly barns, designed for public worship in Scotland, are the product of their parsimony and lack of the spirit of devotion. Town Councils have been notorious in every age since the Reformation for their niggardly outlay and penurious upkeep, combined with the desire to make, when possible, a profit out of every city charge.

To this hour the Tron Church is left without a single stone or brass of remembrance to record the two great ministers who not only made the Tron Kirk famous and prosperous, but also helped to raise and purify the life of the parishes, which the city fathers had so grossly neglected. When Mr. Mac Gregor filled the empty pews in the Tron, the Town Council took thought how they might turn his coming to profit. Repairs were needed in the kirk. 'The Council,' wrote a pew-holder, 'look on church matters as a bull would on a red shawl. Two or three years ago,' the writer continues, 'the cry was raised concerning the loss which the city sustained through a few of the city churches, but after the arrival of Mr. Mac Gregor the church was filled, every seat was let, and even the window-sills were used. Then it was found that the church was so badly ventilated that some had to leave it altogether, while not a Sabbath passed but a few went out sick. The seats of the church being at a premium, the church committee raised them

thirty-three and a half per cent. and declined to let them for less than one year. The congregation were taken by surprise, but believed that the advance was intended to cover the expense of the necessary alterations. To the indignation of the people, this was found not to be the case. The Town Council came to the congregation to raise two hundred pounds to put the city property in order.'

The kirk-session, showing appropriate spirit, refused 'to spend a single halfpenny on this unjust demand.' The Town Council ultimately was shamed into more honest ways, and the only interest in the sordid controversy is the picture of the church pews with seven sittings let to eight or more holders, and every door besieged by non-seat-holders. The 'aggrieved parties' urged in the public press that the complaint was not a new one, as Dr. Chalmers had been recommended to flee from the Tron on account of its unhealthy condition, and 'Certainly,' says the writer of 1864, 'the locality has not improved since 1815.'

In the meantime the spring was at hand. 'The skies cannot always weep any more than human eyes,' the minister wrote as he knew 'the winter of our discontent' had nearly ended for the exiles. The vernal light was chasing away the cold doubts and fears of the past winter. Helen was about to return from Ventnor, sufficiently improved in health to allay immediate fear, and the marriage was to be no longer delayed. His letters to her become full of house-hunting and house-furnishing, and he undertakes the task with his usual zeal and quite his usual inefficiency. His beadles were always Jack-of-all-trades in his service, and lent themselves with the sympathy of their kind to all his pursuits. After one bootless expedition, he says, 'A church officer may be good at house-hunting, but his taste is not to be trusted.' The city of dreadful night has its own surprises, and he was refreshed by one of his expeditions:

'I liked the house I saw yesterday—fine large rooms and a glorious view from the back windows on to the glittering peaks of the everlasting hills. It did my heart good to see

them. I think Ben Lomond is visible, crested and crowned with that brightest coronet, the pure, virgin snow.

'In my epistolary correspondence I use that right, which novelists most selfishly appropriate to themselves, of despising all the proprieties of time. The truth is, I only get a line or two written when inexorable fate hurries me away to that hardest of work, visiting among the wynds of Glasgow. I have been as far as the Coatbridge Station. Now I go to a class of young communicants in the Tron.'

As to the locality of the house, he says:

'We *must* have fresh air, a difficult commodity to get. A heavy curtain of inky soot, not mist, hangs over Glasgow's boasted park. The trees are looking miserable, and stand sorely in need of having their faces washed. The dirt of generations crusts them.

'Isn't the *Fast* Day delightfully kept here? Every one has gone out of town. Won't I have to look after the fasting habits of my people somewhat sharply?

'Mused my lonely way to the park. Miserable! All the smoke of Glasgow had taken it into its head to gather there. Left in disgust, choosing the hard pavement in preference to the wretched walks of the park, pretending in their impudence to be nice, charming, country roads. Met Mr. Charteris and walked with him backwards and forwards on Claremont Terrace till the brim was nearly off my hat lifting it to the multitudes he knew. Called on Dr. Boyd, and saw his wife. Met A. K. H. B. and Mr. Walter, and heard and told stories for half an hour, and got home at six to find the potatoes cold and the dinner such as bachelors deserve and too often get.

'My lodgings are decent, but oh, the cooking department! Last night I had men to supper, and we had to send away the dishes untasted, amidst roars of laughter, and get in bread and cheese, as we must have something to eat.

'How little we do know of a man's personal piety from what we see of him in the world! A healthy religion, a life lived very close to God, puts no barrier upon a man's glee and gladness of heart, or his use of life's million pleasures. Yet we are very apt to think that it does, and to believe that there will be a glum face wherever there is a sanctified heart.

'God help us. Our religion and piety are the only things

about us that will last, the only things about us that are really noble and unselfish and truly comforting, because they make us lean on Christ for our happiness in this world and our blessedness in the next.

'You will think of us all on Sabbath. How I wish that you and I together ate of the bread of life in the Sacrament! There is to me an element of awfulness in that ordinance as well as of joy. I take Christ's words as I find them, "This *is* my body."'

'*April* 12, 1864.

'I am sure you will be glad to hear that at my first Sacrament in the Tron everything went off well, for which I am very thankful. The actual addition to the roll of membership was 188, a little congregation of itself. Most of these, of course, came with certificates from other congregations. Members for the first time were forty-five, a respectable number, considering how short a time I have been here. Old Dr. Boyd served the first table after I had preached, as usual, an *hour*.

'After all was over, and that revulsion came which follows a season of excitement, I felt supremely wretched, and out of pure selfishness would have given a great deal to have you to go to. It is horrible to be in a great hulk of a place like this, and to feel that of all the thousands you meet, there isn't one who cares a single straw about you, whether you sink or swim. In one sense it was the coldest Communion I ever had. You have no conception of the polar iciness of soul that sticks in great icicles to the elders and members of that church of mine. If God spare me I'll put some heat and life in it ere long. They come together as strangers and part from a COMMUNION Table as strangers. A region of more unmitigated, wintry rigour I was never in, —verily a region of eternal snow!

'I left the kirk on Monday after such a Communion as they have never had since Chalmers' days, I mean in point of numbers, and felt as if the whole thing was a blank.'

He was singularly subject to these fits of depression after a time of great spiritual exertion. He sat him down under many a juniper tree and felt that he alone was left, and loneliness of body or mind oppressed him greatly. In those moods he could be trusted to say all he felt of the parish under his charge, and the people with whom he had

to deal; and he could equally be trusted to look with a more patient eye on the backslidings and defections of the world, when his natural cheerful faith in human nature resumed its sway over him.

His letters were full of such resolutions at this time:

'Who can't say like noble Paul, "To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not."

'If I can help it, I shall never add a sorrow to the mighty heap already festering in this truculent world. Will you keep me in mind of that when you come to take charge of me? I wonder if I have broken that this very minute! A man has been in thrusting down my throat a book, 12s., which I have decidedly refused. What a noble effort of decision!

'The house is undergoing the washing operation—the floor of the lobby sailing and the clock presenting the appearance of a very fat and well-to-do ghost.

'These boys outside at football—I wonder if sorrow ever touched them. They look so bright, and are so merry, one would hope they have no cares.

'Och! och! Shall I cry or smile? I could do either at this minute.'

'PAISLEY, *April* 1, 1864.

'I came here yesterday for the ordination service. I never ordained a minister before, and must say it was the most solemn service I ever performed. The new minister rose from his knees after the consecration prayer not only weeping but his face bathed in tears. Aye! It is a fearful responsibility which one takes upon him when he becomes a minister of the everlasting Gospel. The Abbey to-day was "a' kin' o' thin," though the pulpit was occupied by "an eminent Divine." *You* may call him "an assistant," but *he* knows better. Lees is great in having nothing to do this week. A fine fellow with an appetite for chalders. Who hasn't?'

'I must confess that since coming to Glasgow I have not been so uniformly regular in my reading of the morning chapter as I was at Monimail. Although one will make time to read *Romola*, one will sometimes by singular perversity neglect duty. That leads me to say that idleness, most culpable, at the beginning of last week hurried me very much at the end.

'I think *Romola* a marvellous book. It has had a stronger fascination for me because I remember dimly the streets and churches and piazzas of "la bella Firenze," the olive-girt Florence, which I should like to see again.

'*April* 14.—I am almost certain that I have made a discovery, fostered by no other mind, with regard to the appearances of Christ during these mysterious forty days which He spent on earth between the Resurrection and Ascension. These days I make to include the days He lay in the grave, and take them as a round number, the actual number being thirty-eight. The discovery is this: that each of Christ's appearances to His disciples took place on successive Sundays. We know that on the first two Sabbaths (Christian) this took place. On the first He rose from the grave and appeared in no less than five different places and at five different times: (1) To the Magdalene, (2) to the other Galilean women, (3) to Peter, (4) to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus, and (5) to the company of the apostles met in Jerusalem. On the second Sunday He appeared to the disciples and Thomas. On the third Sunday He met the apostles on the shores of Lake Tiberias after an unsuccessful night's fishing.

'On the fourth Sunday the great meeting took place on the mountain in Galilee (that where He preached His first sermon), when five hundred brethren were present.

'On the fifth Sunday He met the apostle James, and on the sixth Sunday He ascended from one of the peaks of Olivet above Bethany.

'If this conjecture is correct an immense point is gained. It shows the influence which led the early Christians to reverence the first day of the week as, emphatically, the Lord's Day.

'I have been reading Renan's wonderful, infidel book. Oh! how he puts us Christians to shame by the sublime honour which he pours on Christ though he believes Him to be a mere man, and partly an impostor.

'After describing the fearful atrocities of Christ's death, as I never saw them described before, he bursts forth in this sublime passage: "Rest now in thy glory, noble initiator. Thy work is completed: thy divinity is established. . . . At the price of a few hours of suffering, which have not even touched thy great soul, thou hast purchased the most complete immortality. For thousands of years the world

will extol thee. A thousand times more living, a thousand times more loved since thy death than during the days of thy pilgrimage here below, thou wilt become to such a degree the corner-stone of humanity that to tear thy name from this world would be to shake it to its foundations. Complete conqueror of death! take possession of thy kingdom, whither, by the royal road thou has traced, ages of adorers will follow thee."

'Blessed Saviour! if Thine enemies so love and reverence Thee, the man, how ought we to love the man and the God? A heart that has no love for Christ: God keep us from that deadliest and most inexcusable of all mortal sins.'

'GLASGOW, *April.*

'How very little a way do we see before us! And it is well. Do you remember the great moral Harriet Martineau teaches in *Deerbrook*: "To be faithful to the duties of the *present*, and not to weave, if we can help it, foolish fancies for the future"? We cannot always do that, but we should try to act upon the maxim, as philosophically as it is scripturally sound, "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." If people had a stern adherence to duty and a firm faith in God they would be happier. How I preach! It is my vocation, you see.

'I entertain not only holy and solemn but almost awful ideas of the relationship of marriage, so much so that the most affecting and most serious duty I ever discharge I feel to be, not a funeral, but linking by the tie of holy Church two human beings together, though they be beggars, as they sometimes were, with rags on their backs.

'Before entering on marriage a man should pray over it and ask himself the question, Have I a reasonable chance or rather prospect of making a wife happy? That is a question not easily settled, I can tell you.'

'*April* 5, 1864.

'Here goes my last letter to Ventnor. Thank God these weary, weary months are by, never to return. Thank God we'll have you soon among us to take care of you. Within a few hours after receiving this will your back be turned on sunny Ventnor—to be henceforth only a memory. You won't break your heart at leaving, yet you will wonder how much you have got attached to the place and to these external aspects of nature which God has made so fair, and

with which for some length of time you have been familiar. We can't break away from anything we have been accustomed to without sadness.'

The travellers made a short stay in what the minister wrote was 'that most weary of all deserts the wilderness of London,' but he is able to add that he is pleased with the hearty tone in which she writes, 'having before you the brilliant prospect of the Crystal Palace, the greatest of all modern structures, and of Garibaldi, the greatest of all modern men.'

'You are right in putting a curb on your theatrical tendencies, not to run the risk of catching cold; otherwise I would have no hesitation in hearing a good actor and a good play. I would have no objection in the world to go to a theatre, but that it would shock the prejudices of good people.'

'*April* 14, 1864.

'Where do you worship on Sunday? You should go to Westminster Abbey. I have a very savoury remembrance of hearing the present Archbishop of Dublin (Trench) preaching a noble sermon there on the prayer of Abraham for Sodom. Be in time and get a good seat, for I remember we had to stand out the entire service, which is not conducive to edification.'

Helen replies that they went as ordered to the Abbey, and 'were edified by *not* hearing the sermon.' The minister does not let it pass, and tells her, 'Won't I, when I get you behind the pillar in the Tron, make you hear on the deafest side of your head?'

There is one more letter before her homecoming. He tells her how the sister who has been with him in Monimail thinks of joining the brother in the dominions beyond the seas, 'so that the rambling propensities of the family don't seem confined to the eldest born. It is just the sort of thing I like. Does that horrify you? I look upon the earth as one country, and the widespread lands as provinces thereof. The great meeting-place and the sure and sheltered dwelling is not here but elsewhere. May God encompass you as a

shield, keep your eyes from tears, and your feet from falling, your soul from death!'

He wrote to ask his oldest friend to be ready to marry them, as the date was fixed. Mr. George Stewart Burns writes in answer from Montrose:

'*July* 23, 1864.

'I shall feel highly honoured and gratified to take part in that most interesting ceremony on the 23rd August. And so it has come at last—one act in your life drama almost played out, another with new scenery and a fresh actor about to begin. Between you and bachelor mortality a great gulf will soon be fixed. I shall be contemplating you as one of an unknown sphere—your existence halved and yet doubled. I go back twenty years. I sit down at the side of a well-known stream. I say to myself, "Mac Gregor is to be married." "Impossible," murmurs the stream. "Out of the question," chirrups a bird. "Put that in your pipe," a trout leaps up to say. "A mere myth," croaks a crow. But a long, low voice booms out of twenty years, "It's a fact." Well, time does change one, and I must wish you all joy.

'Glad to know that Church matters are going on swimmingly with you. The minister of Montrose is a white slave.'

On the 23rd of August 1864 James Mac Gregor and Helen King, daughter of David Robertson, the well-known author and publisher of *Whistle Binkie*, were married by the Rev. G. S. Burns, assisted by the Rev. Dr. Williamson, minister of Collessie. The long anxious betrothal was over, and he had, what he so ardently desired, the right to watch over the fragile life which had now entrusted itself to his care.

A short honeymoon was spent among the English Lakes. In his diary he writes of lodgings in the little village of Patterdale:

'A most exquisitely beautiful spot. Worshipped in the parish church. Were "kirkit." Have spent a most happy time, which I suspect all honeymoons are not. My dear Helen is gifted with every accomplishment that can adorn a woman. Great personal beauty, a vigorous intellect, a pure mind, a warm heart. She has a large share of her father's wit.

Helen MacGregor

'I thank my heavenly Father that the great object which I have had so steadily in my mind for some years has now been realised. God spare us long to one another.'

The house, which had been chosen with much consultation, and after so many had been rejected as unsuitable, was 7 Clayton Terrace, and by the end of September they were settled in it, and the minister preaching again in the Tron, with Helen 'behind the pillar.'

As the Tron Church had welcomed him with overflowing numbers and enthusiasm, so it continued to support the minister they were at such pains to secure. At the first service held after his coming, the place was packed to suffocation. As Norman Macleod of the Barony surveyed the scene from the platform, he turned to his neighbour with the comment, 'Mac Gregor's gathering.'

If he had found Paisley an arduous toil, his work in the Tron was quadrupled. His congregation from without was large, and his parish took all his powers of personal and organised work. In 1865 he was left alone in the charge, Dr. Boyd dying in June. As 'A. K. H. B.' wrote about the funeral arrangements, he said, 'None of us will ever forget your great kindness to my father.' It had been a very cordial relation between the old and young minister, leaving nothing but happy memories behind it.

The eldership was increased, and the whole working organisation of the church was strengthened. When the cholera came to St. Mary's parish in 1866, everything was in readiness for the pestilence that lingered longest over such a parish as was worked from the Tron. A brave and efficient visiting committee, organised by the minister and kirk-session, went daily through the lands and wynds preaching the unknown doctrine of fresh air, pure water, and whitewash.

These were the years of what has been called the 'Renaissance of the Scottish Church.' Twenty years had elapsed since the confusion and depression of the Disruption had been poured out on the churches. What had been contemptuously called the 'Residuary Church' had had her

ranks reinforced by a new generation of ministers full of genius, courage, and high hopes for the life of the Auld Kirk. Norman Macleod was in the zenith of his great fame, and he was on the eve of his fight for the Christian and not Jewish observance of the 'Lord's Day.' Dr. Lee had established his order of Church Service in Greyfriars, and the Assembly of 1864 had the subject of 'Innovations in Worship' again before it in acrimonious debate. The liberal, dispassionate mind of Tulloch was moving in the direction of a wider relation to the creeds of the Church. Story of Rosneath was becoming the spokesman for all these causes in the Church courts. New wine was being poured into the ancient channels of worship and belief. The bottles did not burst, because the innovations very rapidly commended themselves to the Church of the people. There was, however, a good deal of fermentation, and many things were maintained and upheld as right or wrong which to-day seem merely a matter of expediency. 'A *little* common sense, and even a little reticence, are not useless by any means in the hot battle of life,' writes the minister in the midst of a practical fight within the Tron, which was but a concrete instance of the spirit of change which was abroad in the Church at large.

He was never a very willing member of the Assembly, nor indeed of any of the Church courts. 'I go into the Presbytery a humble Christian man, I come out an incarnate devil,' was his startling statement to Principal Shairp, who expressed great delight and sympathy.

He had no patience for the debates and processes by which the opinions of men are formed and slowly led. He never could argue with patience, even if he preserved, by an effort, his temper. The agility of his mind made him see and grasp the side of the question which appealed to him, and to that he held with a tenacity which might lead him to shed the blood of his opponent, but never to yield to him. He was in all these controversies classed as 'Innovations' on the side of the Reformers.

A desire, as Edward Irving put it in his day, for some-

thing 'more Catholic, more magnanimous,' had seized upon the Church at large, and men remembered the Church had a continuity in worship, and that the Reformers and their works were but a link in that long chain which binds the Church visible to the Communion of Saints.

The minister introduced a harmonium into the Tron Church. It was presented by James Brown, 'on condition, if it is replaced, it is to be returned to me or my heirs, as a relic, it having been the first instrument used in any of the city churches.'

A vote was taken as to the views of the congregation. 'Eighty-nine against, or one in fifteen,' records the minister. The harmonium soon became a 'relic,' for the next step was the introduction of the organ. 'Meeting of session anent the organ. Most unpleasant meeting I ever had. Dr. Robertson carried every point however.' His experiences must have been severe, for among his notes appeared one of unusual tenor. 'When speaking of and acting in regard to an organ—remember *festina lente*, which being interpreted Scotice is "ca' canny."' An annual report written by Mac Gregor was never a dull enumeration of numbers and statistics. That of 1865 begins with a brief word that the number of communicants added to the roll in the year 1864 was 511. The minister proceeds to tell the congregation in St. Mary's parish of the future work and the spirit in which it must be accomplished by the people of the Church. An active Deacons' Court had been formed. 'The health of a congregation does not depend upon its numbers, but upon the active Christian spirit which breathes through its members, and upon their united efforts for the spread of Christ's kingdom among themselves and their fellow-men.'

The introduction of instrumental music is noted as an important event. 'It is a change which is almost universally sanctioned by the educated public opinion of the land; and which, there can be little doubt, will be extensively adopted in a few years by all except the most illiberal branches of the Church in Scotland. But one objection has been seriously brought against the movement, viz., that it is a *change*.'

On New Year's Day 1866, he says the most eventful year of his life has gone, 'Crowded with many mercies. The object of many prayers granted. Earnestly wish, if spared to see the end of this year, it may find us both closer to God. May He grant us many more.'

The next entry which deals with his own life follows on New Year's Day 1866. 'This afternoon our little daughter born. Profoundest thanks to God for a living mother and child.' It was christened Frances Robertson, and in December of the same year a second daughter was born to them. 'Angel faces' to their father here, and through the long life left him there remained the hope and belief that they would be the first to smile on him in the land of the hereafter.

In the spring of the year he was ill, 'Got warning not to work and excite myself so much. Second anniversary of my induction to Tron. Two eventful years during which God has given me abundant blessings in the church and in the home. Oh! for more devotion to His blessed service. After four Sundays' absence preached in the afternoon, "I magnify my office"—*laus Deo.*'

He went to Paris for a change of scene and took lodgings there for a month. He soon finds himself the better, as he always was for the change to foreign lands, and he thoroughly enjoyed lively, sunlit Paris. 'Went to see the Emperor and Empress driving in the Bois. Preached in the Oratoire.' The following year they were both in Paris. One of his elders wrote good news of the Tron. 'The seat-holders have not been backward in retaking their seats, so much so that Hume has been walking on his tiptoes for upwards of a week, a larger man than the Emperor of France.' Hume writes, 'A few people have taken wing for Ailsa Craig. I am of opinion that the prose chanting is not to be popular with many of the hearers.' There is a contrite entry, 'Had to pay two shillings customs on tobacco at Victoria Station.' He also visited the Adelphi Theatre. It may have been on this occasion that, when seated in the stalls, he heard a nerve-shattering voice behind him

—'What will they say in the Tron when I tell them I have seen you here?' The minister knew the reproving voice of his kirk-session, but he always possessed presence of mind. Without turning his head he made answer, 'They won't believe you, so you need not tell them.'

As minister of the Tron Church he had spent very happy years. He felt himself blessed in his work, and he had at last attained to a home, where his heart was anchored in a sure and steadfast hiding-place. His 'dear bairns' were already a joy in his life. He was known and valued by the Church at large, and his anxieties were in the background. The holidays shared by his wife abroad and at home had been all full of fresh delights, and in after years he looked back to his life in Glasgow as among the happiest of his days.

'Changes and chances' were, however, again before him. Another Tron Church, with its steeple pointing upwards, in a parish smaller than that of St. Mary's in Glasgow but as densely populated, was calling to him to come and be a minister in the East.

The negotiations from Edinburgh began in the August of 1867. He received intimation of his election by the kirk-session and church committee to the Tron Parish, Edinburgh, and in September, after mature deliberation, he decided to accept the call.

Dr. Mac Gregor has written a chapter of reminiscences in the history of *The Tron Kirk of Edinburgh, or Christ's Kirk at the Tron*, by the Rev. D. Butler, D.D., formerly minister of that church. The work was published in 1906. A long interval separated Dr. Mac Gregor from his time in that charge, which began in January 1868 and ended in November 1873, when he was called to the church of St. Cuthbert.

In the case of both churches the proper name was shortened by familiar usage. The word Tron, taken alone, signifies 'the town's weighing-place.' The full designation in Glasgow is St. Mary's at the Tron, while that in Edinburgh is 'consecrated to Christ and His Church.' In these recollections he says:

'There are only two Tron Parishes in the world—one in Glasgow, the other in Edinburgh. It has been my happy lot to be, in succession, minister of both. On my first or second visit to Balmoral after my induction, I found the Queen much interested, and, I thought, not a little amused at this fact. Her keen intellect would never be satisfied till she had probed to the bottom the subject which occupied her attention, and many questions were put to me about the Tron, its origin and meaning, which I answered to the best of my ability.

'The parish, to which I was inducted in succession to the Rev. Maxwell Nicholson, was unique in many ways—in its history, as this book clearly shows, unique as being in the heart of the city and the smallest parish in Edinburgh, and as being, in the words of my first Pastoral Letter, "one of the blackest spots on earth." It was a dense block of buildings intersected by lanes so narrow that the tall houses almost touched each other, leaving a mere chink through which the heavens were seen. There was one single tenement in Blackfriars Wynd which, a few years before, had been the scene of more than one murder. Within my first year that black Wynd, Murdoch's Close, Skinner's Close, and Toddrick's Wynd were in the process of being swept away, through the operations of the City Improvement Trust.

'The parish swarmed with the most pitiable of all God's creatures—neglected girls. Born and reared in the midst of squalor, improvidence, destitution, and too often of crime, many of them, ere they had passed the term of girlhood, bore the ineffaceable marks of ruin and shame.'

After reviewing the organisations which had been started by his predecessors, the late Dr. Hunter and Dr. Nicholson, also by Mrs. M'Neill, to cope with the various needs of the parish, he speaks of the movements in parochial life which were commenced in his ministry. He tells of the starting of the parochial visitation committee, and how at a meeting held of the male members of the congregation he had detailed his scheme that every family in the parish should be brought under the direct cognisance of the kirk-session. It was done on his initiation, and he adds 'ample work was provided for the ladies by the Parochial and Missionary

Association with its twenty-seven members.' Looking back after all these years, he says:

'I venture to say that there was no parish in Edinburgh whose work was more thoroughly done than that of the Tron.'

The committee reported that though there was much poverty in the majority of the cases, the causes for destitution were inbred thriftlessness, indolence, and drunkenness. The minister in one of his Pastoral Letters has short shrift for this class, and wherever he finds these characteristics they meet with his sternest and severest condemnation. 'The last remedy to which they will apply is hard, honest work. Beggary will flourish just so long as beggary will pay.' From the parish he turns to the heart of the work, the church and its services.

'Once a stately building, it had for the good of the city been reduced to its present modest appearance and humble dimensions. Every available inch of space had to be utilised for seats. There was not room enough for a stair to the pulpit. The minister entered it straight from the vestry. To a new-comer, whether in the church or in the pulpit, the operation looked like that of a jack-in-the-box. To the minister it was an ordeal; it was so at least to me. I never could pray with my eyes open. In a pulpit of the kind, or worse still, in a high pulpit like that of old St. Cuthberts, I sometimes suffered from a nervous feeling the moment I closed my eyes in prayer—a feeling as if the pulpit and occupant were sinking together. Many ministers must have felt as I have done, and would be as grateful as I am if the pulpit were reserved for its proper work of preaching, and the devotional part of the service were conducted below. For preaching, the pulpit and the church of the Tron were perfect. There was no nervous feeling there. The crowded galleries came so near that you felt as if you could touch them. You were within easy reach of every ear and every heart. It was like a little happy family gathering around their spiritual father. I can see them as I write. There come back to me faces which I shall never see on earth again, and voices that have long been still.'

Writing in the last year of his life to Mr. Bowie, Paisley, whose grandfather had been one of the elders in the High Church, he speaks of a hope he has that he may, if ever again in Paisley, call on Mr. Bowie's father, then in his ninety-first year. Speaking of the desire of the old man to hear him preach once more from the pulpit of the High Church, Dr. Mac Gregor writes :

'I have never once preached the Gospel, as far as I remember, in a church of which I had been a minister. Although a Celt I have never had pluck enough to stand the emotion of looking on walls and faces which I was wont to see.'

None of the people over whom he was set in the ministry parted lightly with one who was the beloved friend and the brother born for adversity to all who sought him. The congregation of the Glasgow Tron crowded the church 'fuller than I ever saw it,' and presented a largely signed memorial that he would not leave them. It perplexed his head and his heart, and he sought counsel among his brethren. He notes that one of them warned him, 'A man might be a great success in Glasgow and a failure in Edinburgh.' 'A week of intense anxiety,' he writes. 'Heavy responsibility parting from a people so attached and hardly yet consolidated, and yet my strength is scarcely adequate for continued and successful ministration.' That was the fundamental reason for his change. He never could do the work of a parish to his own satisfaction. The actual visiting tried his physical condition, and his mind was always torn between the work he loved to do in his study and the very different actual claims which loaded his writing-table, and took up his thoughts and time. There are men who can do their work in a professional spirit. No surgeon would have nerve for an operation if he engrossed himself with the miseries surrounding the case before him. But Mac Gregor never attained to the calm of a professional spirit. He could only forget the spiritual or bodily troubles of his people when a new call on his vivid sympathy expelled the previous story. The iron entered

into his own soul. He could not forget, and the distracting warp and woof of human life broke the ordered sequence of the writing and study which was what his soul loved. Whenever he is going through a time of perplexity, doubt, or sorrow, one finds in his diaries that he turns to some study to distract his mind. 'Revising my German' occurs as the Tron bells, East and West, ring for and against his removal. The negotiations and trial sermons took many weeks, but what he told his people when he finally bade them farewell made the ultimate decision never in doubt.

'They were perfectly well aware that the charge was one which, to be satisfactorily wrought, required even more than an ordinary amount of physical and mental exertion. They had shown great forbearance, but whatever opinion they might have charitably formed about him, he would honestly in his last words tell them this—that his work there had not been, either in the pulpit or out of the pulpit, at all satisfactory to himself; nor without an amount of labour which he was unable to give could he see any probable prospect of its ever being so. He was not alluding to that sense of imperfection which every minister must feel; he was speaking of the incessant work, in the way of visitation and otherwise, actually undone. There were few burdens more heavy than the burden of undone work, and duty unfulfilled became an incubus by day and a haunting terror by night. It was not the work but the worry that killed. That burden he had borne. That burden he was bound still to bear in silence, if God so willed it, so long as health remained. But when, in the Providence of God, a sphere was opened up to him which, not to speak of subsidiary reasons, was far more manageable, with plenty of work for his Master, practicable work, who was he that would blame him?'

Thus 'High Dunedin' claimed and won him, and his ministry was not again to pass beyond its gates. This period of his history may well close with a vivid description of his preaching and gifts from the pen of A. K. H. B.:

'In June 1868 the preachers on the Fast Day in St. Andrews were Mac Gregor and Tulloch. For years before that Mac Gregor's popularity had been second only to

Caird's. Mac Gregor was my father's colleague and successor in the Tron Church of Glasgow. When Mac Gregor appeared the great church was commonly quite full, even on a week-day afternoon.

'The difference between the spiritual temperature of the two services of that Fast Day was as the difference between the top of Mount Blanc and a hothouse. Yet Mac Gregor, too, like divers great orators, did not scruple to use strong means to keep attention eager. But you felt perfectly safe; he knew well how far to venture on the ice. He had himself in hand, in his most enthusiastic bursts. And though orthodox in doctrine, there was a broad way of looking at divers things. "You think it very strange when you look at the witches' lake, a few hundred yards off, that poor women should have perished there. You think it an awful thing that poor women should have been drowned or burned merely because they were very old and very ugly." Here the smile was most audible. A professor near me gave a sudden snort. Then the orator went on to say in substance, "Believe me, a good many doctrines which you believe now will seem, a hundred years hence, just as incredible as the belief in witches looks to you now."'

CHAPTER VIII

CHRIST'S CHURCH AT THE TRON

1868-1873

'O living will that shalt endure
When all that seems shall suffer shock,
Rise in the spiritual rock,
Flow through our deeds and make them pure.

'That we may lift from out the dust
A voice as unto him that hears,
A cry above the conquer'd years
To one that with us works, and trust,

'With faith that comes of self-control,
The truths that never can be proved
Until we close with all we loved,
And all we flow from, soul in soul.'

THE close of the year 1867 was marked to the friends of Norman Macleod by the preparations for his departure to India. On the same day that Mac Gregor finally decides to leave Glasgow, he writes of a special service held by the Presbytery: 'Macleod going to India.' 'Attendance at the Indian Committee of the Church' follows, and he says of a dinner given by the Presbytery to Norman Macleod: 'The most successful and pleasant dinner I ever was at.' It was a time of strenuous work in the Church at large. There is a record of a talk with Charteris about 'City Evangelisation Committee,' and again there is a meeting for prayer in the Barony Church for the success of Norman Macleod's missionary journey. 'Finished my French lessons with Monsieur Devallet. They were extremely pleasant. Bought Rousseau's *Emile*, Tytler's *History of Scotland*, Roundell Palmer's *Book of Praise*.'

He went to Edinburgh for his trial sermons: 'Tron

Church full to overflowing. Preached on the whole comfortably. Felt dull in the forenoon. This day should have been devoted to writing ; lost with callers. Must leave the house. Writing at Craig Park.'

The Rev. Dr. Scott, afterwards of St. George's, Edinburgh, writes to him from Maxwell Church :

'I did not know that you were to be disjoined from us so soon. I was truly sorry to see that the act has been effected. It was too bad to have it done as in a corner, and not allow us all to express our mingled regrets and gladness on the occasion of your leaving for a higher sphere. I can only say, "God bless you," but I do it with all my heart. If He prosper you in Edinburgh as He has done in Glasgow, we will all have good reason for gratitude. I do not know what we are to do without you. With most of our brethren, I agree that you are sore needed in Edinburgh, and consider it really a providence that you have concluded to go. Because of our *esprit de corps* for the Church we must be content for your loss, seeing it will be the true gain of the whole. May all good go with you, and may you long be spared the health to work and enjoy its blessed fruits!'

For his introduction to the Tron Church he began to write one of his greatest and best known sermons, 'The Light of the World.' Early in January 1868 he preached for Norman Macleod in the Barony, and in the afternoon he baptized thirteen children in the Tron, 'an unusually large number,' and said farewell to the congregation, whose faces, as his people, he was to see no more. 'Felt deeply the breaking of this tie. God grant that it may be for the best.' He was inducted by the Edinburgh Presbytery to his new charge, and on the 18th January 1868 the family left 'dear Clayton Terrace. Children did not say a word all the way to Edinburgh.' Lodgings had been taken at 5 Jordan Bank, Morningside, and as the household enter into it he 'commends all to God.'

There were the usual efforts to retain him in the charge of the Tron Parish, Glasgow. None of the people to whom he gave his whole-hearted service ever parted from him without self-reproach that they had not done more to show

their value for him. The *North British Daily Mail* reviewed the situation in a leading article, and did not spare the use of the penny a line rod of correction:

'During Mr. Mac Gregor's brief career in this city he has really accomplished marvellous things. He has retrieved the fortunes of the Tron congregation as nobody thought they could have been retrieved, for the universal impression was that they were irrecoverably gone. He found it in almost the lowest and most forlorn condition that could well be conceived. He leaves it swelling with a vigorous life, and in all cognisable respects at the utmost attainable pitch of prosperity. Not even in the days when Dr. Chalmers ministered from the same pulpit, and the merchants of that time rushed across the street from what was then the Exchange to hear his Thursday lectures, has the dingy old building been crowded by a more eager and attentive throng of listeners. In circumstances the most unfavourable, a decisive exemplification has been given of the attractive power that belongs to acceptable pulpit gifts. The excuse that has for so long served for the deserted condition of the city churches—their situation in the heart of the city, and their character as being for the most part dreary and comfortless—has been for ever exploded.'

The Presbytery heard him on his translation, and yielded to the conviction that he was called in every sense of the word to carry his ministry beyond the bounds of their Presbytery. To them Mac Gregor spoke as to brethren indeed:

'On this, to me, very solemn occasion, I have no wish to depart from the judicious practice which ministers of our Church have been in the habit, wisely, I think, of observing on occasions such as this, or to lift the veil of sacred silence from off those interviews with God, and those inward struggles of the soul, which every good minister—every one who is a minister at all—must pass through before he makes up his mind to leave one charge for another. . . .

'The offer from Edinburgh came to me unsought and unexpected. I had never even seen the inside of the Tron Church; the session and the congregation were unknown to me, even by name; the offer of that congregation was a most hearty and a most unanimous one; and, above all, what

weighed with me more than anything was this, that the call which was laid on the table of the Presbytery at last meeting was a call to a charge and to a parish in point of size far more suitable to me than that which I now occupy. My present charge, as is well known to all, is a very heavy one, and to work it with anything like satisfaction exacts powers far stronger than those which I possess. For these, and for other reasons, I am full of the persuasion that this call may indeed be said to be a call from God; and as such I have no hesitation in accepting it, in humble dependence upon the divine blessing, and with the heartfelt prayer that the great Head of the Church may overrule the decision to which this Presbytery is now about to come, so that whatever that decision may be, it shall be for the health of both congregations, and for the good and glory of the Church of God.'

The Rev. Dr. Runciman expressed, in a speech which followed, the feeling of the Presbytery:

'I am happy to have another opportunity of expressing the very deep sense of obligation under which the Church of Scotland lies to Mr. Mac Gregor for the way in which he has discharged his duties during the four years he has been a minister in Glasgow. By his great abilities, his great eloquence, his great zeal, he has collected and kept together a very extraordinary congregation; and it is well worth noticing the great secret of it is this, that he gives himself wholly to his ministry. His talents, his energies, his time, were devoted to that one grand object, and it is a great lesson to us all.'

Soon after he settles into his new life, though old work, he writes to Mrs. Barclay:

'*Jan.* 1868.

'In looking back for the first time on a part of my life that is now past, I cannot help thinking of you, of all the kindness I received from you, and of the too limited intercourse we have had during my stay in Glasgow. Life there was necessarily one of severe and continued labour, and there was no time for the interchange of the old, kindly offices of friendship.

'You will, however, believe me when I say that I still

cling to the old friendship, and that having found you a dear friend from the beginning I hope to have you till the end.

'We removed here into furnished lodgings, where we mean to continue till the time of house occupancy in May. We are in the healthiest and remotest suburb of Edinburgh—if anything too far from my Church. However, the outlook on the Braid and Pentland Hills is more than a compensation for the distance; besides, there are buses every half hour.

'Our visits can hardly be less frequent than they have been hitherto. I need not say how much pleasure it will give us to see you in Edinburgh. There will always be for you in my house what there always was for me in yours, a room ready and a warm welcome. What a change in Paisley since I first knew it! M^cFarlane and Wilson gone. Not a minister of our Church left who was there then. I hear the words, "Be ye also ready."'

The minister of the Tron began to look about him for an assistant, and turned to A. K. H. B. for help. He replies that 'the best of last year's batch of preachers have been picked up.' In recommending certain 'full-fledged men,' he says of one: 'He is a dashing youth with some cleverness, but I never could get him to work. He has plenty of the gift of the gab.' Another: 'A man of some parts, but frightfully conceited. He, with judicious snubbing, might work well enough.'

The Tron Church needed a hard worker in the assistant. It was a much smaller parish than the one he had left. It has been described as 'little bigger than a big carpet, but it is crowded like a hive.'

He started as soon as possible an organisation he had found so successful in Glasgow—a Parochial Visitation Committee. The parish was mapped out into small districts, with a sub-convener for each, and a visitor for every twenty families. The committee consisted entirely of men—bankers, advocates, doctors, and many of the leading citizens of Edinburgh. Dr. Peel Ritchie, ex-President of the Royal College of Physicians, himself a Perth man, was the secretary, and he became an elder in the church.

Much of the present machinery in the Church of Scotland was non-existent, and Charteris was still feeling his way in hostile and supine Church courts towards the filling in of the life and work of the Church.

A certain amount of courage was needed in parochial visitation through the wynds and houses of ill-fame, in every sense of the word, which lay around the Tron. The work of the committee was crowned with conspicuous success, and not the least of the merits of the organisation lay in the fact that it eased the minister in conscience, and in the economy of his energies.

Later on an 'Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor' was started, and to prevent overlapping the organisation begun by the Tron Church was merged into it. The minister's Pastoral Letter to the congregation is as ever full of firm leading, faithful exhortation, and historical review:

'As those who are appointed over you in the Lord, and with that authority which has been committed to us by the Head of the Church, we would desire, through this messenger sent to your homes, to say a simple, earnest word to each of you, individually, regarding that momentous business for whose transaction we have voluntarily associated ourselves together.'

After asking whether their religion is really to them a personal concern, 'a matter between your soul and your Saviour,' he continues in words not often addressed plainly to the people of Scotland:

'The distinction between two things which God has joined together—morality and religion—has been so much insisted on in Scotland, that we have come both in thought and practice to make an unhealthy severance between them. Believe me, there is, and can be, no true religion where there are not holy habits of life; no love to God where God's eternal laws are systematically violated; no love to Christ which is not followed by a life in Christ, and a life like Christ's. Faith is a fact, not a fiction. Salvation is, above all things, deliverance from sin. Is your religion, then, with all its appliances—your pulpit lessons, your

attendance upon ordinances, your sacramental seasons—making you holier and better men and women, more pure in heart and speech and life; more God-fearing, more unselfish, unworldly, prayerful, heavenly-minded? If it is not doing this for you, it is doing nothing good for you, but very much that is evil. . . .

'The home is the great nursery for the Church. We would affectionately enforce upon all who are heads of a household the General Assembly's recent call to domestic prayer as a call from God. And we would express the earnest hope that there are very few homes in connection with the congregation in which the altar-fire has gone utterly out. Cold, indeed, must be the home in which this is the case. It is your duty, in the relation of husband and wife, to live together as heirs of the grace of life, bearing each other's burdens, soothing each other's sorrows, provoking each other to love and to good works, and helping each other forward in your journey to that happy world where the purest love is the only law.'

His first and last words in these letters always dwelt on the responsibility of the whole congregation. They were one with him in the charge:

'Every one of you, by the simple fact of your membership in the parish church, has voluntarily taken on you the obligation to do what you can by your means, your labour, your influence, your prayers, to let these lost wanderers know the great love of Him who so loved the outcast and the poor. There is a light in your happy homes which it is your duty to carry with you into these dark homes, if haply you may bring some of these poor heathens who are nearer you than the heathen across the sea to know the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

'A useless member of the Church is as much a monstrosity as a useless member of the body—not only dead but destructive in its death. The work which our great Master committed to the Church as a whole He entrusts to us as a congregation.

'And for the venerable Church of our fathers—one of the fairest and eldest born children of the Reformation—we have grave responsibilities, that in these troublous times she may be a witness for the truth; and that her light, waxing not dimmer but brighter, God, even our God, may

bless and stablish her. Pray for our beloved country, that the manifold curse which is pressing on her may be lifted, and that our land be healed.'

A house was taken at 17 George Square, and he and Mrs. Mac Gregor returned to Glasgow to see about the removal of their furniture from Clayton Terrace. Their counsellor, the beadle of the Tron, firmly refused to allow them to occupy the house which for so many months had been unaired: 'Some of the books in the study are covered with mould. The beds cold as may be expected, not as many coals as would make a cup of tea. Fires put on for a few days will only tend to bring out the damp. The larger the fire, the greater amount of damp will appear. I have nothing at stake, only to express my opinion. No man living has suffered more than I have done from damp beds. I would rather go to the Police Office any night and sleep on the wooden bed than sleep in your house at present.'

These lugubrious warnings had their effect, and the removal of the household goods was watched over from the Queen's Hotel. Of course it was done in pouring rain, and 'the chairs, etc., all out in the wet.' He took these troubles more calmly than when he had to face them alone. The records are full of reading Max Müller on 'Language,' and Montalembert, also with 'Study of the German Grammar,' interspersed with comments on the doings of the two babies, so nearly of an age. 'Margaret the younger began to walk before poor wee Toodie, jealous to imitate her, masters the art, and two months later she also walks across the room unsupported, to the great delight of her mother and myself.' A very different entry begins:

'*April* 4, 1868.—Eheu! This morning after two o'clock Gladstone's motion for going into Committee on the affairs of the Irish Church was carried by 330 to 270. Mr. Gladstone then moved his first Resolution that the Established Church in Ireland should cease to exist as an Establishment, due regard being had to all personal interests and to all individual rights of property.'

In November John Bright received the freedom of the City—'a splendid speaker.'

The organisation of his parish kept him occupied:

'First meeting of Psalmody Association, first-rate meeting. Meeting to organise Parochial and Missionary Association in connection with Tron. Nearly £100 subscribed.'

He attends 'the funeral of Dr. Robert Lee, Professor Crawford and Principal Tulloch officiating. An immense gathering of people, profound respect shown to the departed.'

His father, now in his eightieth year, came to see his son in his Edinburgh surroundings, and went back to his home as full of thanksgiving as was the minister—'Blessed be God for all His great goodness to him and his.'

Among his parish notes he tells of the marriage of—

'William Donaldson, who lost his leg in the charge of the Heavy Brigade. Scarlett gave the order to charge. His words were, "Gallop, men. Keep your horses well in hand." Leg lost in supporting the Light Brigade. Another of the Greys present, who was wounded at the same time by a bullet in the face.'

The minister's address on such an occasion was probably more full of the details of the battles than on the married obligations of the couple before him.

In his reminiscences the minister writes of the changes in the services of worship and praise after his induction:

'In little more than a month the kirk-session resolved that a choir, consisting of members of the congregation assisted by two or more paid voices, treble, bass, and alto, should be immediately organised, the paid singers to be selected by Mr. Hugh Mackay, a gifted musician, whom they appointed choirmaster, an office which he held till a few years ago, and who still survives to tell of the brave days of old. The Church of Scotland's Hymnal was introduced with the chanting of prose psalms and "portions of scripture."'

The minister avoids here with great ingenuity the word 'anthem.' The congregation were requested to stand

at praise and to kneel at prayer. All these changes were submitted to the congregation, and passed heartily and unanimously by resolutions. The choir was highly trained, and lessons were given on the theory and practice of music. 'The effect,' he says, 'was quite remarkable. Some of the prose chants ring in my ears to this day.'

Dr. Mac Gregor was never satisfied in any of his charges if the music were not of the highest and best. The choir was of the congregation, and the congregation and choir were to be a perfect unity. He had no patience with a choir aloof and apart from the praise of the people. A choir, trained to think only of the music and not of the devotion, was, in his view, but an encumbrance. In one of the Pastoral Letters he says: 'The singing of the psalms and paraphrases by the congregation may be considered fair, but they do not join so well in the prose psalms and hymns.'

In reviewing the period of the Church when the country was tied down 'to some ten common psalm tunes, this time was but too sure an index of the deeper spiritual barrenness which widely prevailed. We owe to the fervour of Israel's return from exile the exquisite psalms of degrees. We owe to the fervour of the Reformation our very finest psalm tunes.' He reminds his people of the several reasons why a congregation should not remain dumb: 'It is that part of the service in which we pour out our hearts to God for the bounties of His providence and the riches of His grace. It is the only portion of it in which the people take any vocal part. It forms the nearest approximation on earth to the employment of our redeemed brethren in heaven. In whatever aspect we view it, we see that here, as elsewhere, we should give God of our best. For the same reason,' he would add, 'we should wear our best clothes in church.'

There are few who can recall the minister of the old church of St. Cuthberts, with his large choir seated so as to form part of the congregation, and who remember the highly trained work of that choir before the introduction of

the organ, but will realise how his views on public praise had permeated the congregation. The choir led the praise, and the sound of many voices carefully taught to consider themselves responsible for this portion of worship was as uplifting as was the preaching.

Mr. Mac Gregor was one of the earliest to put into use some of the Innovations in Worship, in as far as they lent beauty and seemliness to the service. Wherever he was neither the prayers nor the praise were allowed to become cold and formal. The 'Innovations' came to stay, and the fine tumultuous sound of Scottish Presbyterian worship has in too many churches ceased to be. Paid Choirs to-day perform amid silent congregations, and their performances are as lifeless as they are tedious. The service-book has enabled ministers to read the Anglican collects, while they endeavour to imitate all that is most stereotyped in the mannerisms of the clergy. There was no part of the service Mr. Mac Gregor took more trouble about than the form of his prayers. They were no meaningless repetitions that he presented on behalf of the people. If the old expression of 'Lead us' was true of the praise, it was more so when he led the prayers. Had he not believed he was offering the petitions of those before him he could not have been the great minister that he was. Those who were privileged to walk to church with him on Sunday morning, whether across the Meadows or over the Dean Bridge, knew that it was a time when silence must be maintained. It was then he thought over his liturgy of intercession, and rested his mind in confidence that as of old the prayers would reach 'Thy dwelling-place; and when Thou hearest, forgive.'

No one deprecated more the exaggerated use of forms of words. In a sermon he preached on prayer, he alluded to the 'unwritten liturgies' in use in the Church. Some he commended highly, but with the touch of humour that never was remote in his utterances he said that the words, 'We have hewn unto ourselves cisterns, broken cisterns which can hold no water,' was not an apt analogy in the

kingdom of Scotland. Nor were the utterances (Isaiah i. 6), descriptions of the loathsome sores and diseases of the East, appropriate illustrations of the spiritual condition of the Western world.

It was the unity of the services held in the churches where he was minister which satisfied the great congregations he gathered around him. The preaching was part of a beautifully ordered whole, and there are very many who remember his prayers when the sermon has passed from their memory.

Mr. George Lorimer, one of the oldest of Dr. Mac Gregor's elders, relates an incident while he was in the Tron Church:

'It was a warm day in the height of summer, and the noise of the traffic passing the Tron Church was painfully audible. Mr. Mac Gregor was engaged in his first prayer, and it was difficult to follow his words. Before going further he spoke very warmly of the desecration of the Sabbath which was taking place, and appealed to us all to do what we could, by precept and example, to bring about a better state of things. The service then proceeded. At the time he was giving a course of sermons on the Book of Ruth; that of Ruth's choice, according to my recollection, being one of the finest he ever preached.

'Just as he had got well into his subject a child of about two years old woke up from its sleep and began to cry. The man in charge of the infant made no sign of moving. One of the elders went to him and asked him to leave. The owner of the disturbance shook his head, and continued to pat the child without producing the slightest effect on its cries.

'The situation became intolerable, for it was impossible to hear what was said, and it had to be ended somehow.

'The preacher turned round, and, glaring upon the offender, thundered out: "What do you mean by disturbing the worship of the House of God in this way? It is not the fault of the poor little baby. It is your fault."

'Before he had got thus far the unfortunate wretch had picked up the child and made a rush for the door, but notwithstanding this the preacher continued to discharge the

vials of his wrath until the door of the church closed on the culprits.

'As I listened I thought it rather an unfortunate exhibition of temper, although the provocation was undoubtedly great. It appeared that it was not really so bad, for the same thing had happened repeatedly. The man had been reasoned with, but he had continued to come and allow this same disturbance to occur, so that the preacher was forced to take the law into his own hands.

'If he had yielded to the irritation of the hour, and spoken violently and in haste, it was amply acknowledged. At the close of the sermon, among other petitions, the preacher humbly prayed for forgiveness for "any rash words spoken from this pulpit on this day."

'It was the first and last time I ever heard a minister humble himself before his people in this way, and I admired him so much for it that as soon as he was settled in St. Cuthberts, which happened not very long afterwards, I applied for sittings and have sat there ever since.'

From the earliest days of his ministry, when he captured the attention and attendance of the officer of the police force, his intense humanity in its faults as well as its virtues arrested many who afterwards became attached to his church. It was Dean Stanley, on his way to worship with his Episcopal brethren in St. John's Church, who noted the tide of people passing its doors. 'Where are all these people going?' he asked of a working-man who was near him. 'To hear Mac Gregor,' was the answer. The Dean resolved he too would 'hear Mac Gregor,' and next day he took means to know him personally and became his life-long friend.

There are not many more outstanding men to-day than one who said that 'neither Caird, Guthrie, Macleod, Liddon, Wilberforce nor Magee was equal to the best of Mac Gregor.' A. K. H. B. connects Stanley with Mac Gregor in yet another anecdote:

'On the day that we went round the Abbey I had said to Dean Edwards that he was to see one of our great preachers; indeed, after Caird, quite our most popular man. But when Edwards beheld Mac Gregor he was disappointed.

Afterwards I said to Stanley, "You have heard Mac Gregor; I want you to tell this young Dean that he is indeed a great orator." Whereupon Stanley in his most perfervid manner: "Yes, he is a great orator. You can no more judge what he is in a pulpit from seeing him waddling about Westminster Abbey than you can judge of St. Paul from his Epistles!"'

His congregation was not of his parish. It gathered round him from every part of the town, and in the summer months it was crowded with the strangers from afar, and notably from America, who filled every seat and passage-way to hear the famous preacher.

In 1867 he and Mrs. Mac Gregor, 'leaving the dear bairns in charge of their grandmother,' went to Paris. They spent the first day in the Grand Hotel and 'paid the piper,' and soon after gave themselves a day in the great exhibition of that year, 'a huge world-fair, with men and things from all climes and people.' He preached in the Oratoire, a church in connection with the reformed faith in Paris, and having special services in connection with the exhibition. He notes that in one of these expeditions he had a row with the 'cocher,' and called in a *sergent de ville*. He had probably annihilated the 'cocher' before he remembered the arm of the law.

The Edinburgh cabmen knew him in and out of their cabs, and were proud of him as of one of the institutions of their city. It was while he was yet in the Tron that a characteristic wrangle was heard by a passer-by from the cab-rank. Two of the drivers were quarrelling on the respective merits of the ministers of their churches. A third called to them from his box-seat: 'Do you see that little bandy-legged man walking yon by? He will preach both your ministers blin'!' Long years after Dr. Mac Gregor had left his residence in the Grange, a visitor, from force of habit, gave that address. The cabman drove for a few yards, and then descending looked in at the window: 'I think you are wanting Mac Gregor? The Doctor lives now in Eton Terrace.'

The year 1868 was passed mostly in his parish—starting

and strengthening the church organisations, and in watching over his family in their new home. In April, by appointment of the Presbytery in Glasgow, he dispensed the Sacrament in the Tron Church there. 'Four tables—the four to all appearance as full as in former years—920 communicants.' He tells of the progress of his eldest child, 'She is enormously stout and strong.' 'Took the children to the photographer. Both as good as gold. Magsie must be taken sleeping. Restless Magsie.' On a visit to Glasgow Mrs. Mac Gregor is seen by her old adviser, Dr. Stirton. He warns them 'that the danger spot in the lung is slightly increased,' but 'on the whole pleased.' Relieved, Mac Gregor turns for a little to the two occupations for which he had always the patience which failed him in many other things—fishing and foreign languages.

'GLENDARUEL LODGE.

'Up at seven. Drove to the Collusion Pool and fished there till 6 P.M. Heavy wind and pelting showers. A grilse of 5 lbs.'

In the autumn he went to Fife, and from Collessie walked over to Monimail 'and saw the dear old church. Visited and prayed with one of my old people.' He had word often of his friends there. In a letter written to him from his former parish, the writer says:

'I conveyed your message to John. He said he had a pleesant time o't wi' you, and he 'd like terrible weel tae hear ye in the big kirk wi' a crood. He like't ye for this, that always in diffeckwilties ye jist laid your haun on his shouther and said, "Noo, John, dae what 's richt and never mind what the folk say."'

The year 1869.—'Brought in quietly. Dear wee Toodie's birthday. A tall girl for her age, and so nice.' A little later in the month comes a general confession: 'Slept ill last night. Far too late in going to bed. Must retire earlier and rise earlier, else shall get no headwork done. Find that for meetings and business Edinburgh far worse than Glasgow.'

Charles Dickens was giving a series of readings in Edinburgh, and Mac Gregor attended them: '"Bill Sykes' Christmas Card." A day lost for work' James Ballantine, the author of 'Ilka Blade o' Grass,' had sent him the tickets and bidden him 'Be in good time, and be as near the centre of the seats as possible, so that you may be fairly beneath the master's "gleg e'e".'

He took part in resisting the Annuity Tax Bill, introduced into Parliament by Mr. Duncan Maclaren, and was for the time being absorbed in the subject. He called a meeting of his own kirk-session, and attended at 22 Queen Street to organise the opposition. 'All day examining Annuity Tax Bill. Wallace dined and talked over Bill.' He attended the meeting of Presbytery on that Bill, and the approaching Education Bills. His own views were embodied in vigorous letters:

'17 GEORGE SQUARE,
'*March* 16, 1869.

'MY DEAR SIR,—I wonder if you could persuade your friend, Mr. Pagan, to give space in the large type of the *Herald* for a short article on the Annuity Tax Bill (Edinburgh), which has been brought in by Duncan M'Laren. The second reading is fixed for the 21st April.

'The Bill not only practically disestablishes the Church in Edinburgh, but it pays no respect to existing interests. The matter is not one affecting merely the interests of the Church, and the ministers specially, but it is one affecting public justice and public faith, and as such is of general, nay of national, importance.

'A very objectionable part of the Bill is, that it takes away the Church collection from the poor, and virtually puts it into the pocket of the rate-payer.'

'*April* 1, 1869.

'MY DEAR WALLACE,—I have heard to-night that Pagan is to have a leading article on our business, and I have forwarded the necessary documents.

'Could you not back up your clear, forcible, and telling speech of yesterday by a pithy article in the *Scotsman*? The less delay the better.'

This was followed up:

'Sent letters and copies of *Herald* with leading article against Annuity Tax to every Scottish M.P. and to Gladstone, his Cabinet, also to Disraeli, Northcote, and Hunt.'

In April he hears from Dr. Paul of St. Cuthberts that the 'Bill is postponed till June.' And early in 1870 to a correspondent he says:

'The Annuity Tax has taken a turn you see, as things when at their worst so often do. Duncan has got a sound shaking as he well deserves. We must all hope it will do his constitution good. We are in hopes here that ecclesiastical matters may be put, by the new Bill, on such a footing as to preclude the possibility of future annoyance.'

On the 10th of March 1870 there is a joyful note: 'Duncan Maclaren's Bill thrown out by 117 in the House of Commons.' It was Mac Gregor's first, but not his last, bit of work in Church defence, and it was as vigorous as it was effective.

A few extracts from his diary and personal letters best tell of this year settled in his Edinburgh parish and among his new friends in the city.

To Dean Ramsay:

'*April* 14, 1869.—Very Rev. and dear Sir, allow me to thank you very heartily for your kind letter, which I prize very much, more indeed than I can tell you.

'How happy for our country and our religion if your genial spirit more extensively prevailed, and the *perfervidum ingenium Scotorum*, which I once heard translated as Scottish *dourness*, were a little more tempered with Christian charity.

'I have to thank you for your most admirable pamphlet, which I had already read, having got it from Dr. Paul. It should be put into the hands of every candidate for the ministry.'

From the diary:

'*May* 1, 1869.—Five or six callers to-day, four of them ministers—a perfect nuisance.

'*May* 22.—Royal Proclamation from Mercat Cross abolishing old copper pennies.

'*May* 24.—Went to the Assembly. Psalmody in evening in St. George's Church good. A good attendance of ministers and others.

'*May* 31.—Heard closing address of Dr. Macleod. The said closing of Assembly very affecting.

'*June* 22.—Took train to Perth. Drove to Scone. Found the bairns in bed. Toodie opened her big eyes, and filled her mother's heart. Magsie called us by our names. Found my father as usual at prayer. He and mother exceedingly well. Spent a day most pleasantly with the children, and saw them going through the operation of feeding the hens.'

To his twin sister, Mrs. Irvine:

'17 George Square,
'*July* 13, 1869.

'My dear Sister Meg,—I thought of you on the 11th, but was too tired to write to you. How dreadfully old *you* are getting! I wonder if wisdom comes with your years! Alas! alas! the half and the better half of life is gone. Even were we to see the limit of life we cannot expect to see more than we have already seen.

'I pray God for myself and for you that the future may be more devoted to the service and the glory of God than the past has been, and that whensoever it may be the Lord's will to remove us from out this world He may find us with our loins girt and our lamps burning.'

To his brother Dugald, in Bombay:

'*July* 1869.—Spoutwells was looking as beautiful as ever, and is simply the loveliest spot between this and Bombay. The trees around were in their finest foliage, the horse-chestnuts a dense mass of leaves, the oaks larger than when you saw them, and the gean-trees, at least some of them, showing symptoms of decay. What added immensely to the charm of our visit was this, that I never found the old folks better. Father realises more than any man I ever knew the expression of the apostle, "instant in prayer." When we popped in on them unexpectedly they were "at the Books." Any place seems equally suitable for the old man for his worship. It is beautiful. He is a fine old saint, ripening fast for Heaven. God bless him! As for

mother, I wish you saw her—as spirited and full of life as ever, busy from four in the morning till ten at night; pleased you can see, but in her own quiet, undemonstrative way, that her children have got on and are walking in the fear of the Lord.'

A house was taken on the shores of Loch Goil for the early autumn months. He stayed with his family there as far as his many engagements permitted, but the diary says there were many 'whole days out of holiday.' He got leave to fish in the Goil, and was at that sport whenever the river was in good condition. 'Rained last night. Out of one pool with small fly took seven sea-trout, and six yellow trout in a couple of hours.' On a later day, 'Fishing in the Goil. Got a salmon 5¾ lbs. at the mouth of the river. Burns arrived. Went up the wood and sat for an hour on a rock watching the trout in a pool. He and I walked more than half way up to Loch Restle. Heat intense; bathed in a pool.'

'*Sept.* 5.—Fished from 6 A.M. till 8 P.M. without intermission. Got in all fifteen good sea-trout. Rained heavily. River roaring in flood.

'*Sept.* 18.—Left Lochgoilhead in a hurricane of wind and rain. Usual result. No one the worse.'

In October 1869 Mrs. Mac Gregor was confined of a still-born son, and was for long gravely ill. In these weeks of 'frightful agony of mind,' he did what he could of his work, and was assisted by many of his friends. 'Dr. Charteris kindly offered for the afternoon, and his kindness I shall never forget,' writes the minister of the Tron as he felt unable to face the waiting people. As usual, in times of stress, the diary is full of the study of languages. 'First lesson in German from Gustav Welter,' and an hour with him is taken almost daily, and readings in Spanish begun with another teacher. Once again Helen was spared to him and to the children. The New Year they 'bring in with prayer, thankful for the present.' Less and less does he look forward into the future.

His Pastoral Letter for 1870 alludes to the public life of the Church:

'We cannot fail to be struck with the decision come to by the recent General Assembly on the question of Patronage, as marking a most important epoch in the history of the Church of Scotland. The troubled debates on Union in the other Assemblies are also very fateful. We would urge you to earnest prayer to the God of our Fathers for all the Presbyterian churches of our land—mourning before Him our unhappy divisions, our sectarian bitterness, our waste of energy, and praying for a larger outpouring of the gentle and forbearing and loving spirit of the Master.

'In the Church as in the individual hurt rarely comes from without, but almost always from within. It is not the pressure of external circumstance and of hostile influence which works lasting mischief so much as inherent worthlessness and imbecility.'

'Imbecility' was a quality he could never endure. If not deprived by nature of a full understanding, he thought it more than culpable to be imbecile in word or deed. As he wrote to a friend:

'It is perhaps better to have a head than a heart, but a desperate pity to have only the one. A boon and blessing for which to be thankful to God is to get the good head and the sound heart combined.'

In this year his University recognised her distinguished son, and bestowed on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity:

'St. Andrews, *Feb.* 17, 1870.

'My dear Dr. Mac Gregor,—Dr. Mitchell, I fancy, would let you know of our intention at last meeting of Senatus. We were all heartily agreed, and you will accept, I trust, the D.D. as a kindly present from your old *Alma Mater*.—Yours truly, John Tulloch.'

His old friend, Professor Mitchell, writes:

'I wish you much joy of your honours, and may you long continue to be a credit and an honour to your *Alma Mater*.'

His 'truest High Kirk friend,' Mr. Matthew Scott, wrote to him:

'I rejoice at this high honour very much, and I think you cannot fail to be a little proud of it yourself. This is very near the crowning proof of the prophecy I made concerning you when you came first to Paisley. I have no doubt you recollect the conversation we had in the garden at Gateside on the first Sunday you were here—the pointed question I put to you regarding your abilities, and your very solemn replies. It is strange but very pleasant to me to trace back your history since that eventful afternoon. You have now only to be appointed Chaplain to Her Majesty to be at the top of the tree.

'Some envious people have asked me "What Mac Gregor has ever done to be made a D.D.?" "Well, I cannot," I answer, "point to any big book that he has written, but I can say this much, that he has filled four empty churches, and if you can show me any other D.D. who has done the like, I will engage to name half a dozen who have emptied them."'

To this the minister to be henceforth known as 'the little Doctor' or 'the Doctor' answers, and it is the only expression of his feeling at his new honour which exists. His diary contains no allusion to the matter.

'17 George Square,
'Edinburgh, *March* 15, 1870.

'My dear Mr. Scott,—Among the many kind letters of congratulation sent me on the recent distinction which my old University was good enough to give me, there was none so gratifying to me as your own. It would be untrue to say that the unexpected and undeserved honour was not a source of pleasure to me, and yet you would wonder, I wonder very much myself, how very little it disturbed my equanimity. I believe that to very few did it give more sincere pleasure than to yourself, being the fulfilment, as you truly say, of an old garden prophecy which I have never forgotten, and which I did not believe till the event proved it true. That old scene is, at this moment, vividly present to my mind. I can never forget it, nor can I ever forget your cheery and encouraging words. I mind the wee carpet bag, small like the prospects of its owner. I mind the pleasant smoke. No tobacco has the flavour which it had in those days. I mind the glorious freshness of feeling, gone, alas!

"like the singing-birds of that time which now sing no more." I mind a long train of kindnesses on your part after that day, advice and encouragements which have had no small hand in helping me to any little good I have been able to do. In looking back and thinking over the past which your letter brings up to me, I feel that life has no higher reward than the reward which you have won in usefulness to your fellow-men. It is better, after all, than large quantities of bread and butter on silver plates and large sums at the banker's. Be thankful such has been your position in this life in considerable measure.

'I am delighted to hear favourable accounts of your minister. Just what I expected. There is a good backbone in him which has served him well and will serve him better. There is no better school than the High Church of Paisley.'

During the year he had the offer of two churches in Glasgow, with the promise of a unanimous call and every financial inducement. 'I had no wish to go back, and said "No" to both.'

July 24, 1870, he preached 'On War of Prussia with France.' The sermon has not survived; but knowing his sympathies it is easy to believe that, for the time at least, when swayed by his eloquence, the hearts of his hearers were with 'Fair France.' The diary is full of the war, and across the weeks he scores the events in his largest hand: 'Infallibility of Pope. War between Prussia and France declared.' In September they took a house at Tighnabruaich, and from there he watched and noted down the events of the conflict as it went its fateful way. War, wherever waged, always excited his most vivid imagination, and when our own armies were in the field, in spirit he was always in the van of the fight, and one with every soldier in the world's great battlefield.

From the 'dreadful carnage' at Sedan, and musings on the fall of 'Napoleon and his dynasty,' his thoughts were brought painfully home by the news of the Alpine accident which deprived him in so awful a manner of his friend M^c^Corkindale. He tells how the tidings found him:

'*Saturday, Sept.* 17.—Beautiful morning. Wrote sitting

out on the rock at the point. Read in yesterday's *Scotsman* of fearful Alpine accident wherein two Americans and a Scotsman named "Cobendal," with three guides and five porters, had perished. The horrid suspicion passed through my mind that it may be my dear friend M^c^Corkindale.

'Helen and I dined out. On coming home Grace stunned me by suddenly saying that poor M^c^Corkindale had perished in a snowstorm on Mont Blanc on the 6th inst. So passes my dearest friend outside my own family, and one of the purest spirits that it was ever my good fortune to know.'

Reference has already been made to the sermon which he preached in the church at Gourock. With Dr. Mac Gregor to feel was to see. He took the greatly moved congregation with him to the region where his friend had met his death, described the three days' agony in the raging storm, 'in that hollow amid the snow, amid those awful ice slopes, and those glittering peaks which buttress Mont Blanc beneath their feet; death close before them, the world below them, heaven above them, and within the peace which passeth all understanding.' So vividly does he tell the story that the words are moving to read at this distance of time. Little wonder that, as he told a people greatly sorrowing how the body of their minister was found, the sound of a mighty mourning filled the church.

The year 1871 brought 'the angel of shadows' into his happy home. A little earlier he had written to his wife:

'O that future, how short a way we see into it! Yet surely we are not forbidden to strew it with roses rather than cover it with clouds. With God's favour we can bid it welcome. Things are ordered for us. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."'

In January he was with the rest of the world engrossed in the struggle going on around Paris: 'Less and less hope for the poor French.'

From the kirk-session and sundry members of the Tron he received a handsome cheque, 'with our earnest prayers that you may be long spared to go in and out amongst us as our unwearied, zealous, and affectionate spiritual guide.'

In February, amid hard work and home interests, the bolt from the blue descended.

'*Feb.* 5.—Twice in Tron. Preached on Baptism. Eight baptized. Children waiting for us at the door; had a romp as usual with Magsie.

'*Feb.* 7.—About 1 A.M. poor Pigeon taken ill. Doctor came at 10 A.M. and pronounced it scarlet fever of a very bad type.

'*Feb.* 9.—Strong fever, but beautifully patient and quite conscious. Our blessed wee bairn passed away till the Resurrection morn. She looked bright and beautiful, a sweet smile on her lips.

'*Feb.* 11.—Buried to-day in Grange Cemetery. Dr. Paul of St. Cuthberts officiated.

'God has wonderfully strengthened Helen and me. To His name be praise.

'Our dear Magsie no more! Toodie very lonely. Helen very composed. Thank God for His comfort and His grace in this trying hour.'

This child, Margaret, had inherited his vitality and vivid characteristics in no common degree. She had been in advance of her elder sister in her development, and to her father she had been a source of great amusement and delight. He had lived in fear that the desire of his eyes would be taken from him, but he had had no thought of danger connected with this vivacious, happy child. As usual he sat down to pour out his thoughts, and to gather to himself the comfort which was given him. On a sheet of paper he writes:

'DEAR WEE MAGSIE,—Things for which to be thankful. Her short life was a bright, untroubled one. She never had a day's illness. A few days before her death we were saying how thankful to God we should be for the children's great health. She will live in memory like a bright dream.'

Writing to one of his people who had suffered a like bereavement, he says:

'While I believe that the intense pain which wrings a mother's and a father's heart at the loss of their little ones can only be conceived by being borne, I know that there have been wisdom and mercy in His dealings with you as

with all, and that you will know this and admit it one day. She has been spared the sorrows that are inevitable to our race. And what is a greater blessing still, she has been spared the sin which stains every life that is lived long in this world.'

Work was ever his solace, and shortly after his loss he records: 'Preached three times. At close of afternoon service Provost Law's carriage took me to Murrayfield. Addressed children of the Sunday School.' He was asked if he would go to the churches of West Coates, Greenside, and Newington. To one and all he returned the answer: 'No desire to leave.'

'*March* 20.—Wrote speech on celebration of the marriage of Princess Louise and the Marquis of Lorne.

'*March* 21.—Opened with prayer the gathering in the City Chambers to celebrate the marriage. Proposed first resolution: "The Queen."'

His relation with those whose marriage took place at this time was destined to be closer, and they were to bring pleasure and interest into his life in a way he could not foresee while helping the City to show their loyal interest in what so closely concerned the Queen and their country.

In May he received notice that he was to preach before the Queen. Part of his preparation was two days' fishing on the Avon. 'Had two salmon on for four and a half hours. Lost one after being on two and a half; just when landing him he gave a wobble and the hook was out. Provoking!'

'*June* 1.—All day preparing to preach before the Queen.

'*June* 2.—Left for Crathie. Braemar most beautiful. Had no conception of the beauty of the country round Balmoral. In the afternoon saw the Queen. Plain country kirk, with the Queen's seat. Preached on "The Shadow and Example of Heavenly Things." Lord Granville and Lord Dufferin present. Felt very comfortable. Lunched with the court. Had an interview with the Queen afterwards. Found her very pleasant and very kind.

'*June* 8.—A little blood from the throat. Find I have again preached too long and too loud. Second warning!

Must change my style and preach far more quietly if I expect my life to be prolonged.

'*July* 11.—My thirty-ninth birthday. A good way past the summit level of life. Road henceforth all downhill. I give thanks to God that He has spared my life so long, and ask His forgiveness for its manifold sins and shortcomings, and pray Him for grace to give my future time unreservedly to Him.'

The autumn was spent by them both on the Continent, visiting old and new battlefields. After seeing Waterloo they went to Sedan:

'The people in the carriage delighted and amused with my enthusiastic appreciation of their country. Reached Sedan, went to Hôtel de l'Europe—plain and pleasant. Prince of Wales had been here a day or two before. "Professor of English" called to arrange about showing us the battlefields.

'Got a pipe for father and bought a Prussian helmet.'

They saw Metz and Gravelotte, and relics were brought home from all, but very specially preserved was 'a wheat ear plucked from the field held by the British above Hougoumont, Waterloo.'

In September they were back again on the west coast, the air always healing and reviving them both.

A long lost brother, John, who had not been heard of since he started for the gold diggings in Australia, had been heard of in New Zealand, 'well-doing and well.' To him he writes:

'My dear Brother John,—Ever since you came out of the painful obscurity in which you so long concealed yourself, it has been my purpose to write and tell you how thankful to God we all were to learn that you were in the land of the living. Many an anxious thought we had about you. Never mind your unsuccess. "It 's a long lane that has no turning," and even should you never realise a fortune, what about it? It will be all the same at the end. Lead a pure, good life. Love God. Trust your Saviour. Say your prayers and you will find that better for you, now and evermore, than all the nuggets in Australia. "A stout heart to

a stey brae," and no fear of you—health, enough to eat, and the grace of God, what better can a man have?'

The close of the year brought the anxiety for the Prince in his dangerous illness, and Dr. Mac Gregor writes: 'Took part in public prayer for the Prince of Wales on the anniversary of the death of his father.'

The next entry concerns a meeting for 'inaugurating an emigration home to send friendless girls to Canada.'

On the last day of the year he preached 'to a thinnish church' on spiritual prosperity. Afternoon church crowded; preached on 'He crowneth the year with His goodness.'

'David Robertson came through and brought in the New Year with us. Went to Tron Church together: heard the shout which brings in the New Year. It has opened on us in abundant mercy. Father, mother, sisters, brothers, and child all well. The nearer and dearer still in a certain measure of health. And yet her cough is worse than I have ever known it. Nevertheless I begin this year in thorough hopefulness for her and the bairn, trusting all to God.'

In his Pastoral Letter of 1872 he says:

'The year which has now closed has been in many respects an eventful one. The country has been profoundly agitated by the attempt—which in all probability will be successful—to revolutionise that parochial system of education which has been the just pride and the greatest blessing of our country. Whatever the result may be, the Church of Scotland will never relax those efforts which she has put forth throughout her entire history for the religious education of the young.

'Within recent days the cry for her disestablishment has for the first time gone forth from a church in this land. It is a strange cry to come from Scottish lips, and it has fallen very lightly on Scottish ears. It will be raised again. The issue we calmly and fearlessly leave with God. We have no reason to be ashamed of our Church's past. We have no reason to fear as regards her future. We are proud of her honoured name. We are proud of the part she has played in the history of our nation, in the history of the world. Her admirable parochial system, her faithfulness to Christian liberty and truth, the ceaseless and anxious care

with which from her very beginning she has watched over the education of the young—these, under God, have been among the chiefest causes which have made the poorest portion of our common country the most prosperous, and Scotsmen the most loyal, intelligent, self-reliant, and peaceable subjects of the British crown.

'We are thankful for her present peace, for her freedom, and for her increasing prosperity. We have only to look around us upon our sister churches at home to see that *we* have no reason to regret, but very much to make us thankful for, her connection with the State. Than the Church of Scotland there is none more utterly and essentially free, not only in Scotland but throughout these lands, and there is none more peaceful. When we look at the distracted state of other churches, both here and in England, we have abundant cause for thankfulness to Almighty God for the unbroken peace which, for so many years, has prevailed within our own borders.

'In the loyalty of our people to the Church of our fathers; in the love for her which still lingers in the breasts of multitudes who, through hereditary and other causes, are no longer within her communion; in the piety and culture of her clergy; in the character and accomplishments of the young men who are being trained for her ministry; in her sound evangelical doctrine; in her catholic, tolerant, and charitable spirit; in her earnest desire to fulfil her high commission by preaching the Gospel to the poor;—in all this we have manifest tokens of the continued favour of her Divine Head and Master, and good grounds for a sober hope that His everlasting arms will still be around her, His pillar of cloud before her by day, and His pillar of fire by night.'

Smallpox had raged in the city, and he recalls to his people:

'Such visitations are a solemn call from God, not only in a religious but in a sanitary point of view. They teach us that religion has to do with the body as well as the soul, and that as regards the health of both we are each our brother's keeper. They awaken public attention to those forgotten and neglected laws of health, whose violation in the form of overcrowding, drunkenness, ill-prepared and insufficient food, uncleanly persons and untidy homes,

neglect of revaccination, unnecessary exposure to infection, etc., entail those periodical and frightful calamities, which strike down the innocent as well as the guilty. The bloodiest of all battlefields never wrought anything like the carnage which preventable disease causes in this country every year.'

Mrs. Mac Gregor continued to fail through the spring, and to endeavour to check the tendency to hæmorrhage she was again ordered to the south of England. 'Torquay by preference, and the doctors have a reasonable expectation that she will come back well.'

To Torquay they went as soon as possible, for 'Helen getting worse instead of better' had been his own observation during the month of March. They were new lands to him, and he notes the pleasant country along the way: 'Struck with the great fertility of Worcestershire, the purely pastoral character of Somersetshire, and the beautifully modulating nature of Devon.'

Dr. Hamilton Ramsay, the friend of every Scot, and many another who came to Torquay, met them and gave them the feeling that they were not strangers in a strange land.

They settled into lodgings, and he notes: 'The early spring here, one chestnut-tree in full leaf.' He finds the Scots Presbyterian Church—'Dr. Edersheim just resigned. Some little difficulties between him and his people, illustrative of voluntary principle. He was once a god in this place.' He attended the Episcopal service, and gravely states, 'The sermon lasted 12½ minutes.' He preached himself in the Scots Presbyterian Church to 'a very small audience.' His literary occupation was pointing the Psalter. Finally he finishes the third revision, 'troublesome work.' Together they kept the Easter Feast in St. John's Church. 'Excellent sermon from Mr. Robinson, twelve minutes long.' Here he met one who was afterwards to be among his greatest friends, the Baroness Burdett Coutts. In congenial company, and with the knowledge that his wife was daily improving, he was better able to face the inevitable parting.

He left Helen with her mother, as in the days at Ventnor, and went back to Edinburgh, where he was joined by his daughter, 'taller, and can read pretty well words of two syllables.' The invalid remained at Torquay till June, when he fetched her home, 'thanking God for the good the place had done her.'

To his wife:

'*April* 19, 1872.

'After repeated refusals, and after the most urgent remonstrances and requests, I have this day, much against my will, been morally compelled to move the first resolution against the Education Bill, at a great meeting here on Tuesday at two o'clock. The Earl of Mansfield has been asked to second it. My poor father, I have thought, would be pleased to see the great Lord of the Manor seconding his son's speech and resolution. The matter is so important as to be one of prayer. The Education Bill, if passed, dishes religion in our schools for ever; and I have often blamed myself for never having lifted a voice against it in public. Here it comes in God's providence, and I hope with His strength to be able "to say a word in season."

'I have been interrupted by a visit from the Moderator, who has just been capped Dr. Stevenson. He desires to be specially remembered to Dr. Ramsay, for whom he has a great respect.

'Your daughter is standing beside me. She is growing a great, long lassie. She says, "April is the month for making aprons."

'I need hardly ask you to be with us in thought to-morrow when we are to be so solemnly engaged partaking of Communion, and when we can supplicate mercies on one another both for time and for eternity. How I wish that both of us were day by day being drawn nearer to Christ, and that all His dealings with us might be sanctified for our eternal good.'

Mr. Williamson from Collessie and James Ballantine wrote to thank him for his defence of religious education in Scotland: 'I was quite thrilled with your noble speech, for which you merit the best thanks of all who have at heart the preservation of our parish schools, and the godly

upbringing of youth.' 'Accept my best thanks as a Scotsman for your noble defence of our parish schools,' wrote the latter, 'and the religious instruction afforded there to our glorious peasantry. Had it not been for the manner in which I was taught when a very young boy to commit to heart many of the divine precepts given in the Bible and the Shorter Catechism, backed as my teachers were by my dear widowed mother, I might very likely have been a poor specimen of humanity.'

To his wife:

'Yesterday's service went off very well. The church well attended, but as usual that one elder was away the whole day. What an example to set before the people over whom he has been appointed in "holy things"! I spoke very sharply about this the previous Sunday, and being very dour perhaps he took it amiss. That I cannot help. However, he has many excellent qualities, and "that is aye something."

'We, Toodie and I, are every moment expecting Dr. Simson's carriage to take us out to Southfield on very important business, on which I have not had time to bestow ten minutes' thought.

'A lady handed in her card—that abomination—"With inquiries." A world of humbug certainly.

'Dear old Mr. Croall has called to inquire for you, to leave a leg of lamb, and to ask Toodie and Jane to go out and stay at Southfield during my absence. I have concluded the bargain, knowing that under Miss Hall and with Lizzie for a companion Toodie could not be better. Mr. Croall is anxious to get that work done. So am I. That sum of £20,000 is lying like a burden upon me.

'At the public meeting the other day, when all the men rose to leave the platform, Lady Ruthven, who was just below it, roared up to me so that the deafest might hear: "*When are you coming out to see me, you faithless man?*" She is a clever old woman!

'I hear that the *Scotsman* is down upon me, but I have not seen it.

'A dinner at 5.45! These awful dinners! Och, och, how they hinder!

'Lord Stair has refused to be Lord High Commissioner.

Lord Airlie will take his place. Have subscribed £30 to the Endowment Scheme—there is extravagance for you !—and £5 to the Memorial Window, and ! . . . but I must stop.'

He had other anxieties. His sister Margaret wrote that their mother, never complaining, was seriously ill with bronchitis :

'Went through to Perth at once and walked out to Scone. Found my dear mother ill but somewhat better. Got her to promise to get a housekeeper and take rest in her old age. She was quiet and patient. Father now in his eighty-fourth year and looking well.'

An accident to his knee tied him to his couch for some weeks, and limited but hardly lessened his activities :

'Dictated many letters, spent my time in revising pointing of first fifty psalms. News came that Norman Macleod was dead. Alas ! What a loss to our Church ! A great and good man gone.'

It was August before he could get about with any ease, and he dined out to meet Dr. Moffat, the great missionary, father-in-law of the greater Livingstone. 'Had a pleasant talk with him about his early life.'

'*Aug.* 14.—Precisely at nine a salvo of twenty-one guns announced the arrival of H.M. the Queen at Holyrood, on the fiftieth anniversary by the day of the week and month on which George IV. entered Edinburgh.

'*Aug.* 15.—A dark, dismal day—not Queen's weather. The Queen did not leave Holyrood till past five. Quite an excitement in town. Dr. Paul in great feather because he saw her twice yesterday.

'*Aug.* 18.—Twice in Tron. Owing to knee did all the service sitting. Church crowded chiefly with strangers. Interviewed by two American clergymen.'

Their eighth wedding-day was kept at Kilcreggan : 'Very happy years, blessed be God.'

In September he was again summoned to preach before the Queen. In his diary he says, 'Text, "I am the light of the world"; had as little or less tremor than in the Tron

Church. Left Crathie, the ground three inches in snow.' He wrote to his wife:

'CRATHIE, *Sept.* 22, 1872.

'I got here on Friday after a very cold drive, which left a roupiness to-day which I would gladly have dispensed with. Yesterday was spent looking over my work. I got on to-day only tolerably. As usual the sermon was too long. The Queen I did not see. John Brown told me that in going home she said, "It was a very fine sermon, but a little too long." The latter part of the statement was true, although it was only forty minutes, and they were out at the half-hour.

'I lunched with the court and met Mr. Goschen, Colonel Ponsonby, Lady Churchhill, etc.

'They have all been very kind to me here.'

In this year he had lost an elder who had been one of his greatest friends, Mr. John Croall. It was the third loss he had had in the eldership, and in his reminiscences in Dr. Butler's book on the Tron Church, he tells how large a place Mr. Croall had occupied in the church and in the mind of the minister:

'From the first day on which I conducted worship in the Tron there was one striking personality whose wrapt attention greatly impressed me. I can see vividly as I write the fine old man, with his powerful head and kindly face, as he sat below me on the right side of the pulpit, the devoutest of worshippers. I can see the quivering lips and the tears gathering in his eyes as he listened to the Gospel. It was John Croall of Southfield. He was one of those self-made men, strong all round, of whom Scotland has reason to be proud; a man of marked individuality, of indomitable will; of great mental capacity and force of character, combined with great kindliness of heart. In April 1872 his fellow-elder, Dr. James Simson, and myself, dined with him. Though to all appearance hale and well, he had, perhaps, a premonition that the end might not be far away. His object in sending for us was to ask our advice as to the disposal of some £20,000, which he had resolved to devote to benevolent and religious purposes. He specially wished to mark his respect for the Church of Scotland.'

Dr. Mac Gregor suggested to him the scheme of the Theological Lectureship, now known by the name of its founder. The scheme was worked out, and Mr. Croall acted promptly, putting the Trust Disposition into the hands of his lawyers. His signature was placed to it ten days before the news of his death recalled Dr. Mac Gregor hurriedly from Torquay.

The autumn deepened the ever-pressing anxieties of his life —'Been much concerned about Helen's condition. Oh! for more of that peace of God which passeth all understanding.'

In 1873 he is able to write during January: 'Helen in remarkably good health. What a contrast to this time last year.' On 28th January they went to Italy, accompanied by Miss Henderson. Dr. Mac Gregor had undertaken to preach in Rome for three months, and they were away till the end of April. There are the usual records on men and manners abroad. 'The trains move at a snail's gallop.' His companions tease him over his Italian, and say he has been the whole night composing the sentence, *E questo Torino?* The ground was covered with snow, and Florence was colder than Edinburgh.

Arrived at Rome, he stayed in the same hotel where he and M^c^Corkindale were sixteen years ago. Mrs. Mac Gregor was not over-fatigued with the long journey, and thankfully he went off to see the church where he was to officiate.

'Service in Scottish Church, outside Porta del Popolo. A really handsome church, neat and clean, and free of debt.' Lodgings were taken in the Bocca di Leoni, and his time was spent in vigorous sight-seeing, combined with the study of Italian.

The church was 'quite full; had to put more seats in at the side. "To die is gain"—spoke of death of Dr. Guthrie.'

He visited the Waldensian schools, and made his first little speech in Italian.

Easter Sunday fell on April 13th. It was his last in Rome, and he preached to a full church. Their journey was extended to Venice and to the Italian lakes, and by the end of the month he was again at home. Very soon

he preaches in the Tron on the text, 'I must see Rome,' and everything he felt and saw in the Eternal City was put into his sermons and lectures.

His neighbour in George Square, Dr. Paul of St. Cuthberts, was one of his great friends in Edinburgh. Soon after his return he says, 'Dr. Paul is not looking well,' and that it is the result of going up a stair of ninety steps to baptize a child. As he comes back from preaching in the Tron he hears he is alarmingly ill. On the 18th of May he passed away.

Dr. Mac Gregor had determined to move from George Square, and after the usual researches he had fixed on 11 Cumin Place, the Grange, as his future home. 'Flitted from 17 George Square, where we have spent five happy years. A house we shall all remember, for dear Margaret's sake. Dear Dr. Paul used to say that he would miss us from the Square. Alas! we left it on the same day! Have entered the house with prayer for God's blessing, knowing well that "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it." Praying especially for health for dear Helen. God keep us.'

The next entry comes in June; a member of St. Cuthberts calls 'to ask me, in great mystery, what I thought of *Innovations*! A feeler for St. Cuthberts.'

This was the beginning of many negotiations. As usual Dr. Mac Gregor remained outside it all. 'Without moving a finger I find since the meeting I may succeed dear old Dr. Paul. *L'homme propose, mais Dieu dispose.* Some want another minister, I hear, and that unless the congregation is unanimous the Government will appoint Lees.'

His mind was in his own home, for his father was taken seriously ill, and he hurries to Spoutwells. 'Much overcome at seeing us. Calm and collected. I think he may weather it yet.'

'Much talk in newspapers about St. Cuthberts. Nicholson and Scott both in public prints withdrawing their names. How it may end *He* knows! Personally, I would like very much to stay where I am. I can never be

happier. Still, there are considerations on the other side. I hear father is better.

'*June* 16.—Chosen unanimously by congregation of St. Cuthberts to succeed Dr. Paul.

'*June* 30.—This day accepted presentation to St. Cuthberts. Enjoying our house very much.

'*Aug.* 24.—Preached trial sermon in the morning in St. Cuthberts. "O God, Thou art my God." Dean Stanley and Lady Augusta present.

'*Aug.* 25.—Breakfast at Dr. Hanna's to meet Dean Stanley. Had a long and delightful talk.

'*Aug.* 31.—Forenoon, Tron. The Atonement, old and new Theologies. Church very full. Exhausted myself. Afternoon, trial sermon in St. Cuthberts. Crowded to the door, a number having to leave.'

The preaching before the Presbytery and other ceremonies went on through the autumn.

His colleague, Dr. Veitch, wrote to him:

'If I have not hitherto written to you, as in other circumstances I would have immediately done, to congratulate you on your appointment to St. Cuthberts, it has not been, let me assure you, from any feeling of unkindness to yourself personally, but solely on account of the procedure which in the procuring of it associated it with hostility to the principles which I hold myself, by conviction and the vows of office, pledged to maintain. The question with me is—Am I most reluctantly in the fortieth year of my ministry to be made a man of strife or forced to sacrifice my position and my principles? In regard to the delicate as well as difficult relations of a collegiate charge I have no fear of acting with you cordially and pleasantly, provided you are willing to conform yourself to the worship of the Church of Scotland hitherto observed in St. Cuthberts, and to co-operate with me in her proper ministrations, for which surely there is in such a parish sufficient scope for any man's utmost ability, zeal, and activity. If so assured you may rely on my hearty welcome, my best wishes, and prayers.'

His new colleague hastened to reassure the old minister. He told him he had directly or indirectly nothing to do with it.

'I can cordially assure you, in the matter to which you refer, you need be under no uneasiness, as I shall be guided entirely by the Kirk-Session, of which you are and have long been the respected moderator. It is a pleasure to me to say how much I desire to co-operate with you in all that concerns the spiritual welfare of the church and parish to which I have been presented. In the delicate and difficult relations to which you refer it shall be my endeavour, as far as possible, to consult your comfort, and to pay that deference to your wishes to which your age and your high character and position in the Church so eminently entitle you.'

Dr. Mac Gregor felt as he said in a charge to the minister he afterwards inducted into St. Giles: 'The baldness of her services has cost the Church of Scotland dear. There is no reason why, while keeping strictly within Presbyterian lines, our service should not be as rich and decorous as that of any church on earth.' Strongly as he felt, and where he could he practised what were then called 'Innovations,' he never felt they were to be used at the expense of the peace of the congregation or the minister. He reassured Dr. Veitch sincerely and with an honest intention, and the act served to allay suspicion, and open the door to the right understanding in these things. He was soon on the happiest and most cordial terms with his colleague, and greatly gratified him by the request that he would induct him into his new charge. On November 2nd the Induction took place. 'God grant it may be the beginning of a long and useful ministry.'

That wish was to be granted. Long and usefully his life was spent in the service of the Church. He had now all that the world could give him. Every charge he had held had increased the number and affection of his friends. The Church of Scotland was proud of the genius of her gifted son. For him his home contained the centre and core of his earthly ambitions. If it were well with his household, he asked no better gift from on high.

Had he seen what lay before him in the opening year of

his new ministry, his heart might well have failed him, for the road he had to travel was beset with trouble:

'And there the feet pass bleeding
O'er flint and thorn and brier,
And burning desert phantoms
But mock the parched desire.
And every breath a battle,
And every step a fall,
And less than loss of all things,
Shall win no way at all.'

For nearly forty years he was to be known as Dr. Mac Gregor of St. Cuthberts. For the rest of his life that church was to be the sphere of his labours. From her gates he was not again to go forth till the days of his earthly ministry closed. To him her very dust was dear, her good he sought always. As the minister of St. Cuthberts he was to toil long and faithfully in the parish where the church, commemorating the northern missionary, had stood for a thousand years. He was never faint-hearted in the apostolic succession. Believing as he did that the Church of Scotland was the expression of the faith of the people of the land, he believed that to abandon the position of a National Church was to lose the outward and visible sign of faith and loyalty to the Church of Christ. It was to him a vital conviction that pastor and people in their vocation and ministry were an earnest of the nation's belief in the faith once delivered to the saints. 'Covenanted Scotland' meant as much to his religious patriotism as it did to the Reformers. He laboured in the spirit of one who held his commission from the great Head of the Church, and at last his warfare was accomplished.

What his ministry meant to his church, his city, and his country is written deep in the heart of the generations that knew his works, and loved him for his zeal and faith.

CHAPTER IX

THE CHURCH OF ST. CUTHBERT

1873-1875

'But 'tis an old belief,
That on some solemn shore,
Beyond the sphere of grief,
Dear friends will meet once more.

'Beyond the sphere of time,
And sin, and fate's control,
Serene in changeless prime
Of body and of soul.

'That creed I fain would keep,
That hope I 'll not forego—
Eternal be the sleep,
Unless to waken so.'

THE new minister came to his charge in a spirit of great quietness. The shadows were gathering deeper over him, and his life in Christ's Kirk at the Tron had been among his happiest days. One had left his home never to return, and his affections dwelt on the days when the little circle had been complete.

Confidence in the strength for the day never failed, and as he thought of the work before him he wrote, 'God gives every man his day of twelve hours, and His holy will be done.'

He had remembered the loss of Dr. Guthrie to the Free Church in Rome, so in his closing services in the Tron he remembered Dr. Candlish—'Just dying. Prayed for him in the afternoon.' October of 1873 saw his last Communion in the Tron. 'Delightful services. Much strengthened.'

There occurs also in the last months of this year a notice of 'Meetings—Moody and Sankey, revivalists from Chicago,

and later again comes the comment, 'Meetings of Messrs. Moody and Sankey causing great excitement.'

A survival of this period in religious movements remains in a printed form, found among his papers:

'Broughton Place United Presbyterian Church,
'*December* 1873.

'Dear Sir,—The undernoted, connected with your congregation, profess to have received religious impressions at the meetings of Messrs. Moody and Sankey held here. May we commit these cases to your immediate, kindly attention.—Yours faithfully,

'Andrew Thomson, *Minister.*'

His own temperament may have caused his fear of religious excitement, or a touch of that spirit of exclusiveness which, from the days of the disciples, has been present among those who are the stewards of the mysteries of God.

Whatever the cause, he held himself aloof from 'the excitement.' There is a remembrance of him walking one day with a friend up the Mound and discoursing, with his usual vehemence, on aspects of the revivalists' meetings which did not appear to him as expedient. Presently, one of his congregation met him and eagerly claimed his sympathy for a member of his family who had come under the influence of these remarkable men, and had joined a choir to assist the music in their services.

The Doctor was at once enthusiastically warm in his interest and commendation. Not a word escaped him of the fears and doubts which had been his theme a few minutes before. His friend sped on his way, convinced of the understanding approval of the minister.

The story was told as illustrative of the tendency, 'To be all things to all men.' That apostolic injunction is always looked upon as a special temptation to the Celtic temperament.

The anecdote is a good illustration of Dr. Mac Gregor's chief characteristics, intense interest, and sympathy in all that moved the world in which he lived. Viewed from afar, the revivalists and their work met with his criticism. He

then suddenly comes into closer touch with their influence. He is told how they have quickened the spiritual and stimulated to practical usefulness the life of one for whom he cared, and whose good he loved to hear of; and, in the vision of happiness and peace, he loses the sense of abstract dangers, is lifted above any professional jealousy, and his ban is changed into a blessing.

To say that his judgments were well-balanced and uttered in serene self-control would be to paint a portrait which does not reproduce the expression of the sitter, and to err against the very truth of the saying which has already been quoted, and which the Celt is supposed to act on with a zeal bordering on insincerity.

One could easily imagine this son of the clan Mac Gregor deeply enthralled by the narrative of some adventurous highwayman in whom he was personally interested, whose hand was against the world. He would follow the story with lips and eyes showing his participation in the movement of the life depicted. All would go well with the narrator till the development brought him into contact with 'God's laws' broken, with the display of cruelty or greed. Then his sympathy would swing round with lightning rapidity, and the fellowship of emotion would be transferred to those whose duty it was 'to hang, draw, and quarter' the criminal. Once let him be convinced that the motives of a statesman were not based on the eternal verities as the foundation of all statecraft, and Dr. Mac Gregor had no use for him in the government of the country. He was curiously free of suspicion as to motives in his fellow-beings, and indiscriminately enthusiastic over those who worked with or for him. To belong to 'his people,' in the congregation, in the ministry, in the social circle, or in the political arena was, as a rule, to be upheld by the genuine conviction that such people were as near perfection as was permitted in this world. Let him find out that one of his 'swans' was idle or dissolute, that he was a time-server in politics, an unfaithful minister, an unprofitable servant in the great Christian society, and his condemnation was as fiery, his judgments

as uncompromising, as had been his faithful trust and affection. He loved his fellow-men for what they were and for what they gave to help the cause of righteousness in the world. He loved happiness. He believed it to be impossible without virtue, and he could not forgive those who forfeited the one by the loss of the other.

He was conscious of his own trustfulness, and to have his opinion falsified injured his vanity and his faith in human nature. It made him both stern and unforgiving, and years after the individual had failed him in those things he had felt convinced were talents entrusted to his care, there would come across his face, at the mention of the name, the look of condemnation, uncompromising and final.

A great friend of his, one with whom he had worked in the ministry and had loved with deep affection, had a severe illness, brought on by undertaking more work than should have been attempted. The Doctor spent many anxious months remembering his friend, and at last the invalid came to see him, restored to health, and again undertaking work. In conversation it appeared that the patient, in the opinion of his friend, had undertaken more on the Sunday than he had any right to do under the conditions through which he had just passed. It was an unfortunate admission, for he had kindled the wrath of one who was not 'slow to anger.' 'I have thought of you,' he said with fiery denunciation, 'and I have prayed daily for you. I shall think no more, and I shall pray for you no more,' and then proceeded to reveal to him how he was acting against God's providence and neglecting the lessons which his illness should have taught him.

The storm was only allayed by the culprit showing forth as best he might that his conduct had been more guided by sense than appeared on the surface, and that he intended in the future to watch his ways, and regulate them according to the measure of his strength, and obey the admonitions which had been given him in the past, and very specially at the present moment. Complete submission restored the sinner and calmed the Doctor, but the incident manifests all

the sympathetic gifts of his ardent nature—the warm affection for the friend and brother in the ministry, the intense belief in the prayer that heals the sick, the joy at seeing the individual restored to health, and his realisation of what that health meant to the circle of the family, and finally his disappointment that his prayers might be made unavailing because of the wrong-headed and obstinate disregard of those laws which had been broken once, and the warning of God apparently again disregarded. Later in his long ministry he had to curtail his visits to the sick, and his attendance at places where his emotions were deeply stirred. Those who remember accompanying him to some house, where the Angel of Death had spread his wings, will understand how for the time he left his very life with the sufferers and those around them. It is many long years since the writer once went with him to a house of sickness. There still abides the memory of the earnest preparation on the road, the absorption in private prayer, the gathering together in the mind of the circumstances surrounding the family, the long wait till he came forth from the house, the burden of sorrow which he had lightened, weighing on his own spirit, and manifested in his deeply moved countenance—all bringing back to him the instant remembrance of his own undying sorrows. He had found faith and submission. It had quickened his ministry and made his heart glow with renewed thankfulness. 'Pray that when your time comes it may be so with you,' he said. 'There is only one thing for the dying sinner—the undying Saviour.' So he would be one in thought, in suffering, and in the 'glorious hope,' till his whole being would exhaust itself and become absorbed in that which he had seen and heard.

If it had not been that his vitality renewed itself with amazing buoyancy, that his interests could be swiftly captured on fresh topics of thought, he could never have stood the strain of his professional life. His own versatility of mind, and the wide range of his social interests and friendships, were the saving of the forces of his nature.

Edinburgh had brought many new friends into his life.

Most notable people who came to hear him preach were not content till they had made his acquaintance. The Tron congregation, to a large extent, had followed him to St. Cuthberts Church. A less reprehensible deed in their case than in some, for comparatively few had been parishioners. They had been drawn from other congregations to attendance on his ministry. It must, however, be said that, if this minister had always filled his charges to overflowing, he also emptied them on his translation elsewhere.

'Mac Gregor in private talk is just what he is in preaching, only less loud,' said A. K. H. B., and that 'conversation' was as much sought after as his ministry. In these years Lady Burdett Coutts lived a great deal in Edinburgh, and she and the Doctor were intimate friends.

He speaks of her presence at his Induction to St. Cuthberts, and in the opening weeks of 1874 he tells of 'crowded meeting at presentation of freedom of the city to Baroness Burdett Coutts. She did it splendidly and spoke with real feeling.' The city owed much to her philanthropic interest in its welfare, and in these works he was her comrade and friend.

As Dr. Mac Gregor left the Tron for St. Cuthberts another 'bird of passage' entered the church, and his attendance at the services led ultimately to a friendship peculiarly intimate and affectionate, and destined to be the comfort, in the dark days through which each in his turn had to pass, of the two who met face to face that day for the first time.

From the diary: '*Dec.* 7.—Morning in St. Cuthberts. Second sermon: "Temptation," Rom. v. 3. Afternoon Tron. Duke of Argyll present. Text, "The desire of all nations."'

Both preacher and hearer had reminiscences of this first Sunday of meeting. The late Duke would tell how finding himself in Edinburgh on the Sunday, with the 'auld lichts' gone, whose ministry he used to attend, he asked the advice of the waiter in his hotel, and by him he was directed to

hear the minister who was that morning to preach in St. Cuthberts.

The diary does not refer to the Duke's presence in the West Kirk, but Dr. Mac Gregor used to say that when he was in the vestry of the Tron in the evening, he was told that the Duke had come to the service. The minister had intended using his morning sermon, a bold course, for his hearers were usually in a double sense followers of his preaching. Warned in time, he chose a different discourse, which, as the correspondence shows, powerfully arrested the attention and admiration of the Duke, who, in a letter addressed to the Duchess, said, 'I have found a second Guthrie.'

Dr. John Brown, the well-known author of *Rab and his Friends*, an old and dear friend of the Duke and Duchess, had written to him proposing he should go and hear, this to him, new light in the Edinburgh churches, and the Duke replied:

'TARBERT, *Dec.* 7, 1873.

'MY DEAR DR. BROWN,—Many thanks for your suggestion—which, however, I had acted upon before I received it—that I should hear Dr. Mac Gregor.

'I heard him in the forenoon in the West Kirk—and heard enough to convince me that he was a man of power. I therefore followed him to the Tron—where I was told he was to preach in the afternoon—and there I heard what on the whole, I am inclined to think, is the noblest sermon I have ever heard from any pulpit. It was on the text, "And the desire of all nations shall come." I am truly glad that so great a preacher has arisen—to succeed so many of those who are gone.

'The earnestness and force of his delivery, together with the substantial power of his reasoning, and the truth of his pathetic feeling, combine to make a very evident and deep impression on his hearers.—Yours sincerely,

'ARGYLL.'

About the same date Dr. Smith of North Leith wrote:

'*Dec.* 1873.

'MY DEAR DR. MAC GREGOR,—In a letter just received from the Duke of Argyll, he says:

'"I heard with the greatest delight the preaching of Dr. Mac Gregor on Sunday. I am not sure that I do not place the second of the two sermons I heard from him at the top of all the sermons I have ever heard. It is no small satisfaction that such a preacher should appear when so many of the great ones of a former generation have disappeared."

'I let you know this not to puff you up, or with any fear that it will spoil you—you are past that—but simply to encourage you to go on from high to higher. I had told the Duke how great a gain your appointment to the West Kirk was to be, and it is very gratifying that he so fully homologates my opinion.—Ever yours truly,

'WILLIAM SMITH.'

From the Secretary of State for the Home Office came the official notice:

'*July* 16, 1873.

'REVEREND SIR,—Mr. Bruce desires me to say that he has had the pleasure of recommending Her Majesty to present you to the church and parish of St. Cuthbert, and that Her Majesty has been pleased to approve of his recommendation. The necessary directions have therefore been given for the issue of the usual warrant of presentation in your favour to the church in question.

'R. SIDNEY MITFORD.'

The ministers of the Church of Scotland welcomed the appointment, and were unanimous in the opinion that the right man had gone to the right place. 'I see you have accepted St. Cuthberts,' says Dr. Charteris to him. 'I write to say in one hearty word: "God speed you." You are the man I fixed on when our dear friend died, and I am glad that my prediction has come true. No one could do better, if any could do so well, what you are called upon to do, and will do, if God give you strength. May that strength be granted, bodily, mental, and spiritual!' A. K. H. B. wrote, 'It will be a great thing for the church, and not unpleasant for yourself. Great usefulness and happiness to you!'

Dr. Mac Gregor entered on his new charge assured of the friendship of his venerable colleague, and at the call of the male communicants of the congregation.

He was among the last of the ministers to be appointed under the old order of Patronage. To our generation it has a strange sound that male communicants are mentioned as those who alone had a right to call the pastor to be set over them in holy things. Mr. Cattanach as chairman of the meeting intimates, 'Upon the report of the Congregational Committee, which was unanimously approved and adopted, you have been chosen as their nominee, as successor to the late lamented Dr. Paul, one of the ministers of this church. Means will be taken accordingly at the proper time to submit your name to the Crown as Patron, which I hope will meet with the Crown's gracious approval.' The writer expresses the belief that in the event of his appointment St. Cuthberts Church will continue to hold its proud position in the Church of Scotland, and what lies most at the heart of the people, 'that our beloved pastor, Dr. Veitch, will receive one as his colleague in whom he will be able, at all times, to confide as a loving friend and acceptable brother in the ministry.'

What he felt on his Induction is best recorded in his first words to them in his new charge:

'*November* 2, 1873.

'DEAR BRETHREN,—To one of the most responsible charges in the National Church—a charge illustrious for its antiquity, its position, and for the names of men who have held it, and who were great and worthy in their day—I have been appointed a minister according to your call.

'This may justly be called not only the Mother Church of Edinburgh, but one of the Mother Churches of Scotland. Dating from the eighth century it goes back to a time when heathenism was in the land. It took its name, as it perhaps took its origin, from one of the early apostles of Scottish Christianity. It was a church centuries before our country was known by its present name. It has witnessed the struggles of the Reformation and all the revolutions of Scottish history. It is a church dear to multitudes of all denominations in Edinburgh for their fathers' sake, dear to many whom I now address from their own early associations.

'The weight of the memories of the place falls this day on feeble shoulders. I enter upon the duties of the pastorate among you with much fear and trembling, conscious of great weakness in many ways, but conscious at the same time of a humble desire to do my duty whilst my day lasts as God may give me help, and of a steadfast aim to preach from this pulpit Christ and Him crucified as my own only hope and the only hope of a perishing world; and in those days of spreading infidelity, to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. If I know myself there shall go forth from my lips in this pulpit no other than that pure doctrine which many generations of the dead heard within these walls. Under the pain of parting from a beloved congregation, and under the anxiety of forming new ties and of entering on a difficult and untried career, there is not a little to strengthen me in the conviction that I come among you not altogether unknown, and solely by your own will; and that I have not only the best wishes of my brethren in the Presbytery and of the members of the church, but—and it is a great pleasure for me to say it—the kindly and hearty goodwill of many in all classes and of all denominations in Edinburgh.

'There is much likewise to strengthen me in the thought that I enter on my duties among you, and on the difficult and delicate relations of a collegiate charge, assured not only of the friendship but of the fatherly counsel and help of a colleague, whose scholarly accomplishments and personal character entitle him to one of the very highest places among the clergy of Scotland, and with whom it will ever be my pleasure, as it will be my duty, to co-operate in all that concerns the spiritual welfare of this most important church and parish. It will be to me a source of unfeigned satisfaction if I can, in any measure, be a help and a comfort to him.

'Of him whose place I, this day, so unworthily fill, I cannot trust myself to speak. I knew him. What he was to you, what he was to his colleague, your full hearts at this moment tell. His venerable form will long live in your memory. Let his example and his teaching long influence your lives. I can but pray that it may please God to let some portion of the mantle of his wisdom, his prudence, his charitableness, and his deep-toned piety fall on his successor, and that in faithfulness to my Master and in love for your souls, I may

follow his example, and walk in the footsteps of one who, through faith and patience, is now inheriting the promises.

'Finally, I ask from you, what I know I shall not ask in vain, your forbearance, your sympathy, your support. The tie which now binds us is a very holy and a very tender one. The relation which now subsists between us will have very serious consequences, one way or other, for you and for me. In view of that account which will be required of every man, and which, as a minister of Christ, I have one day to give in, I ask of you, last of all and highest of all, what I have learned from an experience of eighteen years to be the strongest support of my ministry, the powerful help of your earnest and prevailing prayers, that the work of God may prosper among us, and that I may be kept faithful, pure, and free from fault, and that while I preach to others I may not myself be a castaway.

'Lord, make Thy way straight before my face. . . . Uphold me with Thy free Spirit. Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee.' Ever the motto of his life.

At the end of this address, he notes: 'On the day I was inducted there were only five elders in St. Cuthberts: Lord Jerviswood, Provost Law, John M'Culloch, Thomas Keddie, and Peter Cattanach.'

On the last Sunday of the year he preached at the afternoon service in St. Cuthberts. 'Church full to overflowing. God bless the word.' He brings in the year 1874 with his usual 'thankfulness for manifold mercies.'

The opening months were crowded with every form of public and private engagement, and though he mentions writing twenty-two letters on one day, they were probably all on business, as very little correspondence remains of this date. The Duke of Edinburgh's marriage was loyally celebrated by the city, and the Doctor moved the first Resolution at the meeting held in the Corn Exchange. Again he watches the illuminations, this time with his wife and little daughter, in whose companionship he was finding great happiness.

In February he says about the afternoon service that the church was packed. 'Heat and bad air very great.'

Old St. Cuthberts Church was built by a generation who thought very little about such matters as ventilation. How many could be seated was the only consideration, and A. K. H. B. says that when 'Mac Gregor is preaching it is made to hold three thousand.'

The West Kirk, which Dr. Mac Gregor entered, was that 'barn-like edifice with no pretensions to beauty, and only saved from complete ugliness by a well-designed spire,' built in the year 1775. It was indeed reared for the purposes of seating a vast multitude, and not with a desire to aid by external or internal beauty a devout spirit in its hearers. Its interior was almost stupendous in its ugliness. The pulpit, placed in the centre of the church, had been occupied by many remarkable preachers. A multitude, day by day, as the early morning broke, had thronged it from the highest gallery to the floor, to hear the matchless eloquence of Edward Irving. A tide of human life, seeking the things which belonged to its peace, had ebbed and flowed through the centuries within this historic church.

Dr. Mac Gregor was never tired of tracing its history and recounting how, when the old church was demolished, the workmen came on the traces of no less than five separate foundations.

He never lacked the vision of the apostolic succession, and loved to look back to the days of the rough cell, where St. Cuthbert himself had stood and ministered according to the rites of the Celtic Church. There had been held an unbroken service of prayer and praise on the same 'sure foundation' through the ages of the church militant. It took all his love of tradition and history to endow the walls, within which he was now to minister, with any sense of 'the beauty of holiness.' Everything that was ugly and sordid was crowded into the interior, and yet those who remember this preacher in the West Kirk of eighteenth-century date know that he was at his greatest and best in the old walls. It may have been the close contact with the vast audience,

packed above and below him, or the voice of that great multitude uplifted in praise, which made those services marked to many of his hearers. To them it seemed that in the more commodious church, which he had set his heart and energy to raise, his voice had never again quite the old ring, nor were the words quite so full of apostolic power as when he held forth in the early days of his call in the church which was till his life's end so closely associated with his pastoral care. It was the church of the poor. The high-pitched, deep-seated galleries held them in a safe obscurity, and they were never frightened away by the sense that they were in an inappropriate place. 'We could not hear all your sermon,' wrote a friend, placed in what were called the Believers' Seats, 'as we were in the top gallery, six rows back, among a noisy, coughing, peppermint-eating set of people.' It was a special providence that prevented any panic arising in that vast crowd. The county councils of to-day would stand aghast at those few and narrow exits, and the skailing of the people down the steep stairways.

The writer was one Sunday in the old church, when a member of the congregation was taken with an epileptic fit far under the gallery. Her companion stepped over the back of the pew, and helped to carry the man out of the church. Dr. Mac Gregor kept rigidly still, and only showed by the pale tenseness of his naturally mobile face any knowledge of what had caused so painful a disturbance during his preaching.

After the service was over, he told those who left the church with him that as the noise began the whole of those in the top gallery rose to their feet, and attempted to lean forward. It seemed to him, as he looked up, as if their concentrated weight might cause some fearful catastrophe. He said he knew that only by the sight of himself immovable and unmoved, though in sight of what was happening, could he act as a restraining influence on those who were following the instinct to endeavour to see the cause of the interruption. It was a perfect bit of dramatic pose, and was entirely

successful in controlling those who, seeing his attitude, trusted him in the moment of panic.

It was such incidents as well as the weekly suffering from heat and bad air that fixed his vigorous mind on the rebuilding of his church on that old, rock-hewn foundation, where Cuthbert had dwelt and preached the word of salvation.

In April Mrs. Mac Gregor was sent, by Dr. Begbie's orders, to the Bridge of Allan. He went with her, going backwards and forwards to his work in Edinburgh. From there he wrote:

'*May* 2, 1874.

'I have just arrived and looked over my papers, but there is nothing particular demanding my attention. Had a note from the Duke of Argyll asking me to luncheon yesterday, and expressing the desire to make my acquaintance. A message came also from the Duke of Sutherland wishing me to see his Grace, but Jane informed him of my absence. Our garden is looking well, but terribly overgrown with dandelions. And, now for the best news of all, I found your lassie at the Struthers playing away heartily and well, for which and for all His mercies bless God, and may He keep you evermore.'

The letter he refers to remains among his papers of this date:

'*May* 1, 1874.

'The Duke of Argyll presents his compliments to Dr. Mac Gregor, and as it would give the Duchess and himself great pleasure to make Dr. Mac Gregor's acquaintance, the Duke hopes to have the pleasure of his company at luncheon to-day at 2 P.M.'

He held his first Communion Service in St. Cuthberts, and was assisted by Dr. Marshall Lang, who took four tables. The service concluded at 4.30 P.M. He says, 'The communicants numbered 1268. A very solemn and I trust a very blessed season.' The anxiety for those away from him was increased by the illness of his child, who showed symptoms of a nature which were only too well

known to her father. He left her 'with a sore heart,' as she was, he says, 'feverish and weak,' and from the Bridge of Allan he wrote her a letter in the clearest printed hand-writing:

'BRIDGE OF ALLAN, *May* 1874.

'MY OWN DEAREST TOODIE,—I was very sorry to leave my wee lassie yesterday, and I did so with a very sore heart, because I saw you were not very well. I hope Maggie Struthers came over and cheered you up a bit.

'You will be glad to hear that dearest mama is a great deal better than she was awhile ago. She is not coughing nearly so much as she did. We are very anxious that you should take as much food as you can. Take your beef-tea every day. Take care when you are out not to catch cold. I hope it has been nice weather so as to let you get out to play; for it is very wearisome for a little girl to be in the house a whole day alone. You must write and tell me when you get the new volume of *Little Folks*. I hope Mr. Edmonstone will not be very long getting it from London. Was the beadle busy in the garden to-day taking out those nasty dandelions?

'It is very strange how fast weeds grow. They are like bad habits. They grow themselves if you will only let them. The best plan is to pluck them out when young.

'Mama says that if the gardener has put in any turnip-seed you must water it; but you are not to water yourself, for you are not a turnip.

'We heard of your fine tea-party, and the flower in the middle of the table. Has Dr. Simson been calling? He is very good and kind to you. Mama has bought you a nice tumbler to take your medicine in, or perhaps some claret when she comes home. She will see her wee girl very soon. Indeed, she says this week.

'God bless and keep my dear girl, and make her soon well. Her own affectionate father,

'JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

In May the abolition of the Patronage Bill was introduced into Parliament, and it was watched by Dr. Mac Gregor with keen and hopeful interest:

'*May* 20.—This week signalised in the history of our

Church by the introduction of the Duke of Richmond's Patronage Bill and the most cordial support it received in the House of Lords.

'*May* 26.—The great day of the Patronage debate, the greatest event our Church has witnessed since 1843. God guide the Assembly's deliberations aright. Much depends on the spirit in which the subject is discussed.

'*May* 27.—Pleased on the whole with debate yesterday in General Assembly, but sorry to see strong speech against the Duke of Richmond's bill made by Dr. Cook. Debate on Patronage in Free Church.

'*June* 1.—To Spoutwells and back in the day. Found father and mother hale at the heart but both very frail. Father sitting in his comfortable easy-chair by the fire, as usual reading his Bible. Ready for heaven. Walked through the old farm-steading, unchanged since I romped about it as a boy. God bless them both: dear and good parents they have been to us all. Their prayers have followed every one of us.

'*June* 4.—To-day I got the unanimous offer to be the first Croall Lecturer. Worth £450.

'*June* 10.—Patronage Bill through Committee of the House of Lords.

'*July* 2.—Declined appointment to Lectureship. Hope I have done right.'

Dr. Mac Gregor had a strong feeling that as he had been instrumental in procuring and drawing up the terms of the Croall Trust, it would be inexpedient that he should be the first to fill the office of Lecturer. Dr. Phin wrote to him: 'Dr. Crawford has been telling me of your appointment as the first Croall Lecturer. I most earnestly trust that you will not decline the duty. It is of vital importance in the present condition of the Church, that the man appointed should be of unquestionable orthodoxy. I see great dangers if you don't agree.'

Probably in his heart he felt his mind not sufficiently at ease to undertake this fresh responsibility, and the hurry and stress of his life, divided between his parochial and private cares, made him feel there was very little chance of that leisure which he felt he should have in preparing a

course of lectures whose effect might be of vital importance to many.

'The interests of this Lectureship,' he says in his reply to the formal request, 'I have naturally very much at heart. Not only is it calculated, in the hands of competent men, to promote the study of theology in Scotland and to enrich our theological literature; but its success, especially at the outset, may be expected to induce men of wealth to found similar Lectureships which, under God, will be a blessing to this and to future generations. My sense of its grave importance, and my anxious desire that it should get a much better start than I feel myself competent to give it, must be my excuse for not acceding to the unanimous and kindly expressed wish of the Trustees.'

The decision was inevitable at the time. He had neither leisure nor heart to gather into a concrete form the theological views on which he based the practical precepts which he taught with such authority and power.

Every minister in his work receives the written testimony that his teaching has not been in vain. A host of silent witnesses to the power of Dr. Mac Gregor's preaching lies before the biographer in the letters which he received from countless people, members of his congregation, and as many from those who had no personal acquaintance with himself, but who felt impelled to tell him the new lights which had streamed in on them through his teaching. 'If we partake unworthily, it will not be because we have not been worthily taught by you,' writes one whose handwriting shows him one of the poor to whom the Gospel had been preached. Another wrote he had been a hearer of the word for many years, and had never before realised what true religion meant. He asked to be allowed to give an offering of twenty pounds, at stated intervals, to be distributed among the poor. To him the minister wrote:

'My dear Sir,—In the laying out of your charity I have arranged to give a few poor but most deserving people small sums, ranging from 6d. to 3s. a week, according to their need. This they will get once a month. The regu-

larity of the gift greatly enhances its value. It must be a source of satisfaction for you to know that your donation will cause for many months great thankfulness in many homes.

'Every now and then I meet with respectable families reduced to great distress through the illness of the bread-winner. There is no higher form of charity than to give help to such, in a quiet way which the world will never know, till the day of distress passes by. Their self-respect and independence are thus secured.

'Four poor but very pious old women have been obliged to go to the Poorhouse, where their life is dreary enough. They get out once a month, and I propose to give them on these occasions a quarter of a pound of tea and a pound of sugar. We in our comforts can have no idea of the intense satisfaction which a small but regular gift like this imparts to these poor old creatures. They look forward to their day of monthly allowance as a great day. I shall be glad to hear that this method of distributing your charity meets with your approval.'

'For twenty years, I may say,' writes another, 'I have lived in a state of religious scepticism, listening week after week to sermons with the utmost indifference, but from the first day I heard you, you seem to have touched a chord in my nature. Your preaching, taken in conjunction with my own experience, seems to confound my reason upon which I had built so much, and although I am still far from having an absolute and firm belief in the Atonement, I can say that the citadel has been shaken and perhaps unbelief may fall.

'I shall never forget the sermon you preached some months since from the words, "But go thou thy way till the end be. For thou shalt rest and stand in thy lot at the end of the days."'

'HEXHAM, 1870.

'There is a cheap trip from this to Edinburgh in July, and some of us would like to know if you are to be in your own pulpit or any other in Edinburgh on that Sunday.

'I take this opportunity of trying if I cannot interest you, so that you may make some movement in your Presbytery, so that the state of the National Scottish Church in England may be brought before next Assembly. I hope you are so ardent a son of the Church as to set a movement of this

kind agoing in some way. The Moderator last year acknowledged that there had been great neglect, and made a promise of something being done. I am connected on both sides with ministers for generations, and since I came to live in England a few years ago have been vexed to see how the English Presbyterians and U.P.'s are increasing the number of their churches, while there is if anything a falling-off of the very few of our churches that survived the Disruption. I forget now the number of Scots that come into England every year. It is a fearful drain on our church so many belonging to her getting connected with other churches, or perhaps giving over going to any.'

In St. Cuthberts, as in the Glasgow Tron, the crowding of the pews was excessive, and led to feelings which were not exactly those of peace. One exasperated hearer wrote to the minister with a greater sense of grievance than of the humours of the situation as presented by himself:

'1874.

'I had great pleasure in listening to your magnificent appeal "to grow in grace," but it would have been much enhanced if I could have seen your face. Why I could not I shall tell you. The order was passed, "All those standing take seats where you can find them"; my wife and I were shown by the beadle into a comfortable pew. Some minutes had elapsed when a lady and gentleman appeared, and indicated by their opening the pew door, and staring rather grimly, that we were to vacate our seats. There was plenty of room for my wife, and if the gentleman had allowed her to remain I should not have thought much about it, but I thought this man (he looked like an autocrat and had not the manners of a costermonger far less a Christian) would know that the admonition to be careful to entertain strangers is binding whether they may be angels or devils. You know how it goes against the grain to be turned out of a pew, and especially when you see there is ample room for yourself and wife, with a little squeezing. May I ask you with your wonderful powers to preach a sermon on courteousness?

'*P.S.*—I forgot to say that we were ultimately placed next to the precentor, and had a beautiful view of everybody we didn't want to see, but one.'

The household moved to West Kilbride for the autumn. The weather was propitious to his indoor occupations, and he absorbed himself in Tasso's *La Gerusalemme Liberata.*

Then, in the swift passing of the overshadowing clouds, he tells of 'a glorious harvest morning, a day of heaven upon earth—the Sound—the clatter of the reaping-machine in every direction. Great belts of cloud across Arran and Goat Fell. Heat tempered by clouds. Alison, Hunter, and I had a bathe.'

In September he and his wife went to Aberdeen, and he passed on to preach before the Queen at Balmoral.

'Mr. Campbell of Crathie waiting for me at Ballater. Cold, rainy drive, but very kind welcome to the manse. Evening looked over work. Letter from General Ponsonby conveying hint that it might be as well not to be too long. Delicately put.

'*Sept.* 13.—Preached with very considerable comfort. The Queen, Princess Beatrice, Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh, Lord and Lady Derby, etc., present. Church crowded. Lunched with the court.'

One of the congregation who was present, the Right Reverend Dr. Dill, has kindly written his recollections of the service held that day in Crathie Church:

'In the beginning of September 1874, I was on a walking tour with a friend in Aberdeenshire. We had passed the night at Braemar, and on Sunday we determined to walk to Ballater, stopping on the way at Crathie for Divine Service.

'As we came near the church it was easy to see that the Queen was expected. On arriving we were conducted by an elder to seats in the gallery quite close to the Royal pew. The morning was bright and beautiful, and the church was crowded.

'A few days before the Duke of Edinburgh had brought his bride to Balmoral, and they accompanied the Queen to church. In the gallery pew, immediately in front of the pulpit, sat a party from the castle, and among them was the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, the Earl of Derby, whose commanding figure and large head singled him out for notice.

'Just as the Queen quietly entered the pew, Dr. James Mac Gregor ascended the pulpit stairs and at once began the service, reading with distinct and incisive voice—

> '"Set thou thy trust upon the Lord,
> And be thou doing good;
> And so thou in the land shalt dwell
> And verily have food."

'The Queen could be observed helping the Duchess of Edinburgh through the intricacies of finding the Paraphrases as apart from the Metrical Psalms.

'His prayers were ardent and devout, every sentence, every word expressing what each worshipper, Sovereign as well as subject, ought to have felt. The sermon preached was remarkable for its courage, fervour, and appropriateness, the text being—"David, after he had served his own generation, by the will of God, fell on sleep."

'"I. David was a king, but for all that he was not above serving. It is the duty of a sovereign to serve. If he does not serve, he is not in his right place. Our Lord took upon Him the form of a servant. 'I am among you,' He said, 'as one that serveth,' and that led to His exaltation. So it is in every department of life.

'"II. Whom did King David serve? His own generation, the people of his own time, his own country. His subjects around him day by day occupied his attention. Do the duty of the hour. Think of present requirements. Don't grasp at things beyond your reach. Don't try to serve future generations, but your own generation, and success will come. 'Whatsoever your hand findeth to do, do it!'"

'Then came the question, "How did David serve his own generation?" The answer was, "By the will of God." "The present generation, a sovereign's subjects, can only be helped 'by the will of God.' If the schemes devised and the laws enacted be in accordance with divine truth, all will be well."

'Here the preacher's clenched fist was vigorously struck out in the direction of the pew immediately opposite, where. having folded his arms, Lord Derby sat looking across to the pulpit, his fixed eyes set beneath his heavy brows, Then burning words were heard: "You politicians tell us that you have to serve the people, and that you must do this or that because the people want it and must have it. I say you cannot serve the people by giving them what they

demand, unless it be in accordance with the will of Almighty God. You are here to serve the people, but remember that you can only do so by the will of God."

'After he had expressed these thoughts in a forcible fashion, he became calm, and his conclusion was full of pathos. "The end of a life spent in the service of this generation by the will of God is rest. A day fittingly occupied is naturally followed by sleep. A day of wrong-doing is succeeded by a restless night, bringing disturbed visions and bad dreams. Spend the day of life doing faithfully and well what your hands find to do, and the end will be sleep, the rest that remains for the people of God."

'In a crowded hotel at Ballater that afternoon there were many references to the sermon delivered by Dr. Mac Gregor in Crathie Church. One could not help feeling that both Sovereign and subjects knew that practical truth had that day been forcibly taught.'

The Doctor's diary was more detailed than usual on the events of this visit:

'*Sept.* 13, 1874.—Sat beside Sir William Jenner at luncheon. Not nearly so pleasant as on former occasions, when the ladies of the court made it delightful, especially the Dowager Duchess of Atholl.

'After lunch walked with Professor Black up the hill to where the Queen takes tea, and had a beautiful view of castle and surroundings.

'On our way met a messenger from General Ponsonby with a letter saying that Her Majesty wished to see me, and asking me to breakfast.

'*Sept.* 14.—Dog-cart from castle called for me. Found breakfast ready. Had a plate of porridge. Dr. Jenner also. Mr. Disraeli came up to me, and asked me how the country liked the Patronage Bill. I answered, "Unquestionably a most popular measure, and likely by the blessing of God to be most useful." I said our divisions were a curse and a scandal to Scotland, and it was difficult to understand how such divisions and "isms" could flourish. He answered, "By the vanity of the individual." He greatly feared at one time they would be unable to pass it, and was very astonished at the overwhelming majority. His party several years ago had considered the measure when in opposition,

but it was of no use. In Scotland the thanks were mainly due to the Lord Advocate,[1] whom he characterised as a man of great ability, and who knew well the temper of the House of Commons. He was sorry that the health of the Lord Advocate was not so satisfactory.

'He seemed gratified that all parties liked the Bill, and believed it likely to do much good, although its effects would not be immediate.

'I told him that the Rev. Dr. Gloag told me the opposition in the U.P. Presbyteries was made almost entirely by the older ministers, the younger sympathising with the measure. When I said the majority for the Bill in the Assembly was far greater than the most sanguine anticipated, he assured me that Lord Rosslyn's telegram telling him of the enthusiasm of the Assembly supported him greatly.

'Mr. Disraeli impressed me much, a massive, deep-lined, careworn, and not very Jewish face, uncommonly like the clever cartoons in *Punch*; a face that seemed unused to smiles, although from what I heard at table he can chaff well. A slight stoop—still he looked younger than his years. He was very much colded, but with care had got it out of his chest. His first remark was that he thought our breezes were healthful, but they had proved otherwise to him. The truth is he had come from Glenshee to Balmoral probably too lightly clad, in an open dog-cart.

'After breakfast General Ponsonby took me to the Queen's apartments, the room called Prince Albert's, a little room with a picture of Prince Albert in a frame standing on a table facing the door by which the Queen enters, and it is the first object which meets her eye, showing that the face of her late husband is an inspiration to her still.

'The General placed me furthest in, and stood beside me till the Queen appeared. A door opens, a short, stout, graceful figure in black with a sweet mouth and smile suddenly appears, and at once in reply to profound obeisance makes the remark: "You have changed your church, you have gone to St. Cuthberts. Where is it?" "Just at the end of Princes Street, beneath St. John's Church." "What class of people?" "All classes." "Is it a large church?" "Holds two thousand five hundred, and when thoroughly full three thousand." "Indeed! Are you not going to build a cathedral? Are there many Episcopalians?"

[1] Later, The Right Honourable Baron Gordon of Strathearn.

"I am afraid of giving numbers." Turning to General Ponsonby: "Pity the Scottish people should not worship in the Scottish Church." "I believe, your Majesty, the landed proprietors of Scotland are committing a fatal mistake in ceasing to worship with the people of the soil."

'"Is the Patronage Bill to work well? Some people say it is going to ruin the Church of Scotland." "That is a mistake. The general impression is that it will do good."

'*Sept.* 15.—Mr. Campbell drove us to Braemar. Met the Queen driving with Miss Stopford. She bowed, over and over again, and smiled most graciously.

'*Sept.* 16.—Helen and I drove to Garrawalt through the forest of Ballochbuie. Met Lord and Lady Derby.'

It was a pleasant rest, and the last autumn holiday they were to share. Helen was able for a certain amount of exertion, and together they drove and walked. There was fishing for the Doctor, and he preached in Braemar Church to a large congregation. The bracken was touched by the first frosts, and the heather had faded on the hills ere they turned their steps home 'by the Spittal of Glenshee. It poured with rain all day.'

Before settling into his work he went home and found his father 'very frail; the old man is evidently fast breaking up.'

Of his October services he says, 'Had a blessed Communion, which I hope I shall never forget. May it date the commencement of a closer walk with God. Dr. Veitch called; had a long conversation on spiritual things.'

He had not been at all well on his return from Braemar, and was kept in the house for a week. Wearily he records 'forty rings of the bell—callers,' and there follows the ever ready distraction, 'Have read a good deal of Spanish. Day lost at Synod, letters—read Spanish.' Among his outside labours, he 'wrote letters for the Church Defence Association, the Inauguration of Association for the Maintenance of National Religion, and a meeting of the Home Mission.' He was in the full tide of his winter's plans and work when his wife had a recurrence of hæmorrhage, with great suffering, which was diagnosed as internal rheumatism. 'Dr. says to take her South.'

He seems to have been less alive to the weak condition of Mrs. Mac Gregor than at some other times in the long history of his careful nursing. The South had so often done much for her, and he probably believed that another winter away from Edinburgh would restore her to her usual frail health.

There are no records from which one can gather that he specially feared as he entered into this cloud. The story of this winter he has left set out in that full detail, which to him was always a relief.

All those whose life-story is told in the tragic tale are now 'a handful of grey ashes, long, long ago at rest,' and yet the words of this burden of a great sorrow are as instinct with the pain of overwhelming grief as on the day when they were written down by this man, so sorely tried in the deep places of his heart. Truly he passed through a fiery furnace of affliction, but if the record speaks of an agony which cannot be altogether revealed here, it tells of a strength given for the day, the faith of a disciple of the Cross, and the sense of the near presence of Him who was like the Son of God.

In December he took his wife and daughter, with his sister, Mrs. Irvine, to Bournemouth. It was not a happy selection, nor were the party in a condition to brave discomforts. They arrived in bitter and gloomy weather. Father and daughter began a search for lodgings, and fixed on 'Church Glen.' Dr. Mac Gregor says:

'Bitterly cold, as bad as Edinburgh. Thick frost on the ground this morning. Helen walked out a little, but she is very weak. I have never seen her so far through. House like a hospital. This week marked by Helen's removal to Bournemouth, which may God in His great mercy sanctify for the health of both body and soul.

'First impressions of Bournemouth not favourable. Bleak, cold-like place; weather very indifferent.'

Health resorts are, as a rule, among the gloomiest localities in the country. The perpetual presence of invalids, and the appliances for their comfort, serve to remind the inhabitants, either whole or diseased, that ill-health has driven them from

their homes—strangers in a strange land. The sombre pines and ilex-groves, the sad grey seas churning beneath colourless cliffs, are not inspiring seen through the medium of sullen skies and black frosts. It snowed slightly, and the child and her father returned from a walk up the Poole road, 'the east wind piercing us to the bone.' Mrs. Mac Gregor had no strength to go out, and felt the cold in the comfortless house. The minister found his way to the Presbyterian Church, and joined in 'an excellent service from the Rev. Mr. M'Gill.' Sitting beside him in the church was the Rev. Mr. Cosens of Broughton. He also was in Bournemouth for the sake of his health, and was to prove himself in the future weeks a friend indeed. The following Sunday the Doctor preached. He went to some of the Anglican services, and in one church 'saw mass performed. Wrote an account of it to Mrs. Phin.'

The ground became covered with snow three or four inches deep, and the wind moaned ceaselessly through the pine-woods. At that time there were fewer clearings in them for the thinly built houses of a so-called salubrious climate.

If medical men could sometimes follow the invalids they banish from their homes, when their knowledge gives them the assurance that no land, whatever its latitude, can bring back life, they would abstain from adding the pangs of loneliness to disease, as the traveller passes through the border lands into the dark valley beyond.

They were not without friends and companions. Dr. Mac Gregor speaks of seeing Drs. Edersheim and Hernack, and Mrs. Stevenson. Writing home to Spoutwells, he says:

'CHURCH GLEN, BOURNEMOUTH,
'*Dec.* 20, 1874.

'MY DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER,—We have been here for ten days, and have found the weather bitterly cold. This has been against Helen and Margaret, for it keeps them indoors. Indeed, I have found it as cold here as ever I did in Edinburgh. We have had frost for several mornings, and there was slight snow to-day. We very much fear that this cold weather will be sorely against you; and we

earnestly hope that you are getting every comfort which your case requires. I hope my mother is keeping on roaring fires and not sparing the coals.

'We are here in the extreme south of England, just a little west of the Isle of Wight. The country for miles and miles is as bare as a peat moss, with nothing but pines and a thin covering of heather. It is the poorest country you ever saw, being nothing but gravel. This is what makes it so dry and healthy. The moisture gets away easily, and as soon as the rain is over the ground is dry. It is very highly recommended for invalids. I never saw so many people suffering from chest disease anywhere, certainly not at Torquay nor at Ventnor.

'Dear Helen is so weak that she cannot walk any distance. She therefore drives out every day in a small carriage, and Toodie and I walk beside her. If once we had good weather she will pick up and gather strength.

'I remain here till the New Year, when I must return to Edinburgh; but I hope in a short time to return to be with them as much as possible.

'To-day I was preaching in the Scottish Church when the Earl of Kintore was present. We have a great many ministers here in ill-health, among others Professor Crawford of Edinburgh, and the Rev. Mr. Cosens of Broughton, formerly minister of Fossoway, Uncle Barthy's minister.

'And now, my dear father, I must be drawing to a close. It is a great joy to us all to know that amid the weakness of far advanced age you have the presence and support of your adorable Saviour, whom you have long known, served, and loved. May He continue to bless and comfort you, my dear father; and may all your children have grace to be as faithful to their God as you and mother have been.

'I hope that mother is standing this cold weather well. I hope she is good to herself, and is sparing herself no comfort. See that mother has the most nourishing food possible for you.'

From his diary:

'The year has gone out in darkness. Dr. Nicholson of St. Stephen's unexpected death is a great blow to the church in Edinburgh, where he was an unquestioned power.

'A terrible accident at Skipton: thirty-two killed and seventy wounded.

'Then the burning of the *Cospatrick*, and the loss of nearly five hundred lives.

'I give Thee thanks, O Lord, for Thy merciful preservation of me and mine.'

'*Jan.* 1, 1875.

'In the cold, comfortless lodgings, Church Glen, Bournemouth, Helen, sister Margaret, Ann the servant, and myself, brought in the New Year with prayer, thanking God for His mercies, and trusting ourselves body and soul for the future into His Holy Hands.

'Helen weaker than she has yet been, Margaret also far from well, Ann not strong, Toodie well.'

It was hard to leave such a household, but the call of his duty was insistent, and he felt he had already given all the time he could properly call his own to his family cares. He left Bournemouth on the 2nd of January, a cold, dark, bitter evening, and continued his way to Edinburgh by night. He was always a traveller who needed some one to care for him, and came on his friend, Mr. Landale, 'who contributed very materially to the comfort of the journey. At Thirsk passed the scene of the serious collision on Thursday night. Reached Edinburgh in safety.'

He had to go as soon as possible to Spoutwells, where he found 'my dear father very weak, head clear, hand steady as a rock, no pain except when trying to rise, then a great deal.' He fulfilled a promise to lecture at Kirkcaldy, reached home, and reported himself to his wife.

'*Jan.* 13, 1875.

'As usual my lecture last night, two hours in length, has left me utterly exhausted to-day. The excitement of seeing my father, your absence, altogether have fairly done me out, and I am going off to bed.

'Oh dear me, it's a poor, poor world, hardly worth the clinging to! Would to God we were all prepared for the next! Do bear up a little, and I will get through and spend a fortnight with you.

'*Jan.* 14.—If you think there is much joy going on here, it is a mistake. The master of the house is very so-so in body and in mind. Remember, every day is bringing more sunshine and comfort.

'Here I was called away by a marriage. The thought of you, and the deep and wonderful love between us, made me speak very tenderly and earnestly.'

With his departure the last ray of brightness left the lonely lodgings at Bournemouth. Mrs. Mac Gregor was always subject to fits of depression in his absence, and with her increasing weakness the nervous affection grew in intensity. He wrote to her daily long letters, which Mrs. Irvine said made the exiles feel back with him. But there was no concealing her misery of mind and body, and his wife says, 'Tears blind me as I write. You would be wae to see me. This place gets uglier and uglier. It is dull work living here. How to kill time is our one endeavour.' His letters tell how he reads the sadness in those from Bournemouth, and again and again he says he is torn between his duty to the Church and his love and duty to her.

'You must try and not think of me as much as you do. Think of God's mercies in the midst of all your darkness; and remember that it is my duty to be here doing the work which God has given me to do. I trust that both of us will live this year a great deal nearer Him, and prepare more than we have ever done for the long and happy year of eternity, where these clouds will all have passed away.

'What is to be done? I have my duty here. I have my duty to you. It would be comparative peace to be with you. It is simply misery to be away.'

Mr. Cosens wrote him constant news, but he also seems not to have perceived the rapid failure in the invalid. He took the child out for walks, and her mother reports a happy return from his house, where she enjoyed 'the decentest tea I have yet had.' 'Frances,' writes her kind friend, 'with her sprightliness must make sunshine in the lodgings, which, between ourselves, seem rather dull, and too near the tolling of St. Peter's bell. Do not be overanxious about your friends here, for so far as I can I shall look after them.'

Frances herself wrote a pencil letter to her father, and in

return he advises her mother to find some school to which she could send her daily.

'My dear Papa,—Don't scold me for writing on Sunday, for you sent me such a goody, goody book, that I am frightened to read it, and the prayer-book you left with mama would be better in your study at home. Many thanks for sending it though.

'I am using my diary that you so kindly sent me. Safe journey to you; although I did not write you, I did not forget you, I began one letter. Mama was out a short walk, but was so tired after it that it did not do her much good. Good-bye, dear father, for this is post time. Writing is an infliction to me as yet.—Your affectionate,

'Frances R. Mac Gregor.'

'Frances is getting very wild,' wrote her mother, 'but there is no doubt she is a very clever child.'

'*Jan.* 16.—I don't remember, except when you were dangerously ill, passing through a week of such depression and restlessness as this has been. I have been utterly useless for anything like work, and my preparation for to-morrow must be begun after dinner.'

'*Sunday night.*

'*Jan.* 17.—The church was packed quite full, and without any name we prayed very earnestly for you. The whole congregation I have no doubt bore you specially on their hearts. The Lord hear their prayer and grant you relief from trouble, and the sanctified use of all the long trials He has been pleased to bring you through! May we know the meaning of all your long suffering. Dr. —— is very poorly. They want me to call for him and pray with him. It seems when Dr. —— calls for him he talks a little and leaves without prayer. What a mistake we ministers sometimes make. Those we call for may be secretly craving for prayer when we are afraid that such things might annoy. Has there not been a little of this coldness in our own relations to one another? We should not put the most important of all things the last.

'A sound night's sleep to you! God bless you and hear our prayer for you, and sanctify all this long sorrow to you and to me!

'*Jan.* 18.—Remember that if you are even holding your own during this weary and dreary season it is a great matter. Every day is putting the chills of winter-time behind you, and bringing the warmth and the reviving sunshine nearer you. Set your stout heart to it as you have done before, and trust in the good hand that keeps us and gives us all. Would to God you could get rid of that depression, and of everything else which hinders your recovery. You talk of aimless days. No day, my dear wife, should be aimless. You have your duty to yourself, your duty to me, and above all your duty to God.'

On this same date Mrs. Mac Gregor's servant wrote urging his return to Bournemouth: 'She has not got a night's sleep since you left. She does not know I am writing to you.'

A letter from him lay unopened and was endorsed by him:

'This letter was posted by my own hand, and delivered by my own hand—never seen by Helen.

'*Jan.* 19, 1875.—I am anxiously looking for a letter to-night, which I trust will bring me the much-desired news that you have been resting better. To-night, I dine much against my will at M. L.'s, where the affairs of the Kirk will be discussed.

'The very thought that I am to leave on Monday to be with one so dear to me makes me a changed man. What a wonderful thing is that God-implanted love between husband and wife! It seems already as if a great burden were lifted from off me. If God has put in the hearts of us poor sinful creatures such a wonderful wealth of love towards one another, and if we can suffer through our love such acute and keen pain, how surpassingly great must be the love of His heart who gave up His dear and well-beloved Son for us! And, if we can use human language of God, we may say: how must His heart be pained when we reject His love with scorn or unbelief! God is the Father in the divine parable of the Prodigal Son. That parable shows us how God yearns for our love, our restoration, our reconciliation to Him. Will not your suffering and mine, through you, bring us closer to God and to His dear Son? I have often thought during these weeks of darkness and pain that it is only our own suffering for those we love which can give us

any idea of the unfathomable depths of the suffering of the Son of God for us whom He loved unto the death.

'Oh, Holy Jesus, blessed and suffering Son of God, hear our united cry to Thee that we who have so loved one another may be led to love Thee more, to lay upon Thee all the burden of our cares and sorrows which Thou lovest to bear, and may together so trust our souls to Thee, that the love of time may be perpetuated pure and sinless and holy through the infinite ages of eternity.

'Again, God bless you all and bring me safely to you.'

On the evening of the 19th he received a wire to come at once, and he left for London. He reached Bournemouth the afternoon of the 20th, and his wife was the first to recognise his footstep in the house.

As he entered the room, he says, 'One look told me all.' A sudden chill had brought congestion of the lung, and on the 23rd of January the long and bravely fought battle for life was peacefully over. 'At home at last,' he writes as he thinks of the weary craving of the exile for the home she should never have left, and for which she so passionately yearned. 'Till my earthly Sabbaths are done, keep me, oh God, true to Thee, and grant a happy reunion when the endless Sabbath comes.'

Father and child, 'with our precious burden,' travelled back to Edinburgh. On the 28th January Helen King Mac Gregor was buried in the Grange Cemetery, beside her beloved Magsie:

'Everything has been done that could be done. Got sleep from my heavenly Father. My next look at her will be on the morning of the Resurrection.

'Dr. Veitch preached for me on John xiv. 18, paying a beautiful tribute to my dear wife.'

It was well for him that he turned back to his work under a compelling sense of duty. Nothing else could have preserved him from a condition which in after years he said might have overtaken him. Preaching was his life, and in returning at once to his church he notes his exhaustion and 'the power which was with him in the night.'

'*Feb.* 7.—Preached on Christ, the Judge. Weak, but strengthened. Felt that as the minister of those who had passed through sorrows equal to or even greater than my sorrow, I had no right to shirk my duty and hug my sorrow at home.

'Poor Toodie came in crying before dinner: "I want mama. Everybody is cross to me."'

His motherless child was much on his heart, and he knew he could not keep her at home without any one to be a companion or guardian to her. He consulted Miss M'Laren at the college for ministers' daughters as to sending her to school, and they agreed 'it was worth a trial.' He took and left her there. 'Feeling my loneliness more than ever. God be gracious to me and my girl.'

He had such consolation as the evidence of a wide circle of friends could give. From every quarter the letters of remembrance flowed in upon him, alike in the one hope that the comfort which he had given to others might now be with him.

'*Feb.* 12.—Letter from the Duke of Argyll asking if I preach on Sunday week, and to dine.'

A passing memorandum of the second effort on the part of this friend of his future life to make his acquaintance. The little letter lay amid the correspondence of this time, unlike the rest in that it takes no note of the sadness in the house to which it was addressed. The Duke had as yet no personal knowledge of the Doctor, and the tidings of his loss had not reached him through any channel of information. The friendship lay yet in the future, but for those who know what that intimacy was to bring to both of them, the little formal note has its interest woven into the web and woof of this time of 'mingled shades of human woe.'

'*Feb.* 1875.—Perhaps Dr. Mac Gregor would be kind enough to inform the Duke whether he preaches forenoon or afternoon on the 21st at the West Church, and whether he and the Duchess and their daughters can have seats on that day.'

The meeting between the two could not take place, and on the 16th February he was summoned to Spoutwells by the news that his father was fast approaching his end. Mrs. Irvine was with him, and together they went home.

'Father very low, but conscious. Knew us quite well, and gave us his blessing. We all had worship together, probably for the last time till we reach the mansions above.

'Feel unfit for work to-morrow. Got Stuart to do it; most kind of him. Church was full. Duke and Duchess of Argyll and daughters in M'Culloch's seat.

'In afternoon got a telegram that father had passed peacefully away after he had served his own generation.'

The day of the funeral he was attacked by a severe chill, and regretted he could not go to the church with his mother, who was accompanied by her two other sons. 'A sad, sad day—ground covered with snow and intensely cold; dear mother keeping up wonderfully.'

On March the 2nd he returned to Edinburgh and found his little Frances, whom he had left in perfect health, ill, and he was at once told she had diphtheria. He was too unwell himself to go to her, and a short and tragic correspondence in pencil passed between the two. Frances wrote:

'I am a great deal better. I am reading *Little Folks*. I will write down a piece of poetry to amouse you.'

Her father answered:

'*March* 3, 1875. In bed.

'MY OWN DEAR DAUGHTER,—Your very kind and thoughtful letter has just reached me by the new carrier, and has given me great satisfaction. I am very thankful to God for making you better; for you are my dear little mouse. Take care of yourself, and keep the clothes on.—I am, yours in bed, PAPA.'

A day later, Frances writes:

'When are you coming to see me, for I am wearying to see you? Write by return of post. I will give you a hymn.'

His answer came 'by return':

'Beddybaw.

'MY DEAR DAUGHTER,—The post has just brought your nice letter, and I liked the poetry very much; it is so suitable. I am very sorry I will not be able to get your length for some time, the distance is so great; but I will make an effort to come and see you as soon as possible.

'Pray take care of yourself, and get rid of that sore throat. —Your affectionate papa, JAMES MAC GREGOR.

'Miss FRANCES TOODIE ROBERTSON MAC GREGOR,
'West Room.'

No more letters were to pass between them.

'On the evening of the 6th Dr. Burn cheered me with the assurance that he thought her out of danger, but during the course of that night there was a change for the worse. Again, the three doctors thought her doing well. On Sunday I began to fear the worst. I had the great privilege of sitting up with her and nursing her on the night of the 16th. When I opened the window in the morning for the doctors to see her, I saw at a glance that she was near the end. During my absence for medicine she died very quietly at noon.

'On the 14th they had prayers in the churches for my dear wee lassie. God has answered them in His own good way.

'*March* 19.—Quite calm and composed, trusting her wholly to God, and thankful that her fight is over, and that her soul is with her Saviour.

'Dr. Veitch conducted the service very tenderly.

'The dearest, sweetest, and best of children, so beautiful, and bright, and reasonable. Not for this world.'

Again the multitude of his friends gathered round him, and gave him all that human sympathy could give. He did not shut himself from his kind, and he was able to use and feel the comfort of the companionship of those who understood him and the depth of his sorrow. Dr. Charteris preached for him in St. Cuthberts on the Sunday following the funeral, and very tenderly touched on the grief which had fallen on the pastor and his people. He recalled 'the bright child, her face with the sunny smile, and the clear eye that so readily danced in merriment; in happier days the

very picture of all that was glad. When left alone with her father she comforted him with a strange, wistful wisdom beyond her years; when she suffered pain, such as few suffer, "doing her very best" to use such remedies as the highest skill and tenderest love could apply, she bore it with a patience that won the admiration not only of her relatives, but also of one in particular who had seen many old and young suffer and die. If her sorely tried father had had no Gospel and no Saviour, I think his heart would have broken yesterday, when he was laying her where he has now laid all the treasures of his home.'

It was indeed a saving faith that carried him back to his empty house, and gave him the courage to turn and face his life's work. The human heart has its limits for suffering pain, and the cup of fear and foreboding had long been full. There was nothing left for his heart to dread, and the submission he loyally yielded to what he felt was the will of God brought with it consolation.

One who first met him in this year of suffering said it gave him an insight into the meaning of the words 'marred' with sorrow. In face and mind he carried always the marks of the supreme suffering through which he had passed. It was an ever-present memory, but one which from the first he determined should not be one of unavailing remorse and regret. He never failed to say that his life had been a long and very happy one; and wherever he could find joy and gladness, he took it and rejoiced in it as from the Father of all good gifts. His treasure was no longer on the earth; he had nothing further to give up, and he turned with more complete devotion to his work in the ministry.

On the 28th March he was again in his pulpit. 'Preached for more than an hour, with God's helping grace. Got over the ordeal very well.' He wrote a line to Mr. Cosens at Bournemouth:

'*March* 1875.

'God bless you, my dear friend, and all your household. I can never forget your kindness to me and to them who are away.

'I am doing my work in a poor way, and have very much for which to be thankful.'

He went for a few days to Collessie manse, to his old friends, near Monimail, and spent the time in long walks 'from twelve to five,' examining the young plantations of larch and Scotch fir in the Monzie grounds. 'These few days beside the hills have done me good. Dr. Williamson's conversation also of great value, so fresh, so spiritual and uplifting. Above all that, God is with me, and guiding me to devote the remainder of my life wholly to Him and to His glory. Amen.'

CHAPTER X

FRIENDSHIPS

1875-1876

'Before the beginning of years
There came to the making of man
Time, with a gift of tears;
Grief with a glass that ran;
Pleasure with pain for leaven;
Summer, with flowers that fell;
Remembrance fallen from heaven,
And madness risen from hell;
Strength without hands to smite;
Love that endures for a breath;
Night, the shadow of light,
And life, the shadow of death.'

IN turning back to his life, the first care of Dr. Mac Gregor was for his mother, who had been left alone in the home of his childhood. He found it very difficult to settle into his Edinburgh work, and the spirit of wandering, which had been suppressed in the years when he could never feel at ease away from his family, returned upon him with greater strength now that he had no home-life or ties to call him.

His mother was very advanced in years, and the consideration of her condition and prospects at Spoutwells, and the feeling that her sympathy was what he needed, called him back to his early home.

There had always been a complete understanding between him and his mother. He had ever been the son of her right hand. She had early divined his great gifts, and wished for him the life of the ministry.

He knew how deep and close had been the union between his father and herself, and his own experience made him enter doubly into her bereavement.

The thought of her and the seclusion and quiet of the homestead, with the associations and hopes of his early youth, when 'all the bugle breezes blew réveillé to the breaking morn,' was the rest he craved, and he turned him to the wellsprings of his childhood.

'Found mother wonderfully well and strong. Walked to Waulkmill. Saw the Tay rolling proudly past, the view from the Balboughty Ride unrivalled—the whole country from near Dunkeld southwards. The valley of the Almond opens up to the Grampians, and is beautifully wooded.

'A most delightful health-giving day. Read Spanish in the evening. Meditated on the Communion, which mother and I are to take in Scone Parish Church. Thought on Christ's great love. His special mercy towards me. Dear mother bears up with wonderful bravery.'

It was a time when he felt 'as if heaven was opened,' and he writes with deep solemnity of the assurance of pardon and great joy experienced in that ordinance of which he and his mother were partakers the following Sunday.

Wherever he was, in foreign or in the home lands, 'the perpetual miracle of spring' was always a joy to him. He notes the trees coming into leaf, and tells how in one of his many walks he released 'a poor sheep caught in a net, attracted to the spot by the flock coming and bleating to me, and then going to their suffering fellow. The most striking instance I ever heard or saw of the sympathy and the sense of stupid sheep. They looked on attentively during the operation, and then, to show their stupidity, tried their heads through the same place where their fellow was caught.'

His evenings were passed in the study of Spanish and Italian, reading *Don Quixote*, *Gil Blas*, Tasso and Machiavelli. During the sitting of the Assembly in May the Moderator telegraphed to him at Spoutwells asking if he would go as one of a deputation to the Church in Canada. The time for that journey had not come, and he telegraphed back a refusal.

'Have enjoyed this time very much with my brave old

mother—my books, my thoughts always away with my God. The solitude, the glorious weather, the wondrous scenery—all contributed to soothe me. I trust I have benefited both in body and soul from my holiday.'

In June he was back at his work, but his strength and nervous vitality had been too severely strained, and there occurs the first indications of a weakness which was in the future to cost him dear. 'As a result of leaving church when very much heated, I have had all the week a bad cold and pain in my chest—a warning to change flannels ever afterwards.'

He notes two letters received, one from the Duke of Argyll asking him to meet the Queen, and another from Mr. Hope offering him a trip to Iceland.

This third attempt to know the preacher, whose personality had never been forgotten by the Duke, was not this time to prove unavailing.

'*June* 19, 1875.

'DEAR DR. MAC GREGOR,—The Duchess and I were much grieved to hear of the heavy domestic sorrows which prevented us from hearing you and seeing you early this year in our visit to Edinburgh. Allow me to assure you of our very sincere sympathy in those sorrows, of which we have heard more from our old friend Lady Ruthven.

'It would give us much satisfaction if we could induce you to visit us this year at Inveraray, some time in September. We have some reason to expect a visit from the Queen in that month. Her attachment to the Church of Scotland, and her great interest in its ministers, with whom she has become acquainted, renders it desirable that she should have opportunities of meeting them and hearing them, and I know she would have great pleasure in meeting with you.

'We would take care, however, to make the time as quiet and pleasant to you as possible, and with no calls upon you as to society in which you might not be disposed to join. Perhaps you will kindly tell me whether we may hope to see you. I should be glad to think that ten days or a fortnight spent in the West Highlands at that season might not be without some benefit to yourself, as it certainly

would be a very great satisfaction and pleasure to us.—I am, dear Dr. Mac Gregor, yours very truly, ARGYLL.'

The Duke's invitation was accepted. In the meantime his friends in the west had been thinking of him, and planning for him the two things which he best loved—a change of scene and a sea voyage.

Perhaps earlier in this memoir mention should have been made of Mr. Binnie and his house at Gourock, which the Doctor regarded as his home. 'My friend, Provost Binnie,' was a name more frequently on his lips than that of any other individual. In a letter dated from Gourock, he says, 'I have withdrawn to this, my beloved retreat, for the purpose of rest and change and work as well, where there is nothing to worry me from morning till night except my conscience.' Mr. Binnie had been at one with him in his sorrow for the loss of his minister, Mr. M^{c}Corkindale, and many of the ties of a long and warm friendship existed between them.

They had in Mrs. Gamble another friendship in common. She was a woman of strong and remarkable personality, and of great wealth, which she used in widespread and unostentatious charity. At this time she was resident in Gourock, and the Institute which bears her name was built and endowed by her. She possessed a fine yacht, the *Cecile*, and as she was a most excellent sailor, took many a party on expeditions both far and near. The Doctor had a great regard for her, and was grateful for her care and thought of him.

The three friends, with other of Mrs. Gamble's guests, Mrs. and Miss Drummond of Megginch, embarked in July on 'the *Cecile* of 278 tons, manned by Captain Ward and sixteen sailors.' Their first port was Kingstown Harbour, and Dr. Mac Gregor was full of interest in revisiting the scenes of some of his earliest travels in Ireland.

They paid a visit to Cork and were not very favourably impressed. 'When Binnie retires he says he will not settle in Cork,' a decision the Doctor seems to have agreed in.

However, he preached in the Scots Church in the city, going there by train when the yacht was lying off Queenstown. He says, 'Two Roman Catholic priests came alongside the yacht, wishing to see Mrs. Gamble, but the staunch Protestantism of the yacht-owner made her forego her usual sense of hospitality, and they were sternly forbidden to board the *Cecile*.'

The yacht came back by the south coast of England, and, one by one, the well-known landmarks were passed, till at last they reached Torquay 'with all its memories.' On the last day of July his thoughts were with his church. 'On July 31st, 1775, one hundred years ago, the church of St. Cuthbert was re-opened for worship. I bless God that I still preach the Gospel in it.'

With the thronging memories thick upon him he watched through his glasses all the well-remembered points in the landscape. 'Had difficulty at first in catching Bournemouth. The captain not sure if it was marked on the chart. At length I saw distinctly the houses along the east cliff—being quite visible to the naked eye. I remember the walk in the bright winter day which I had along the cliff with Toodie, and she too is at home with God. That God who made the human heart knows how hard it is to bear—but His Holy Will be done.'

In sight of these scenes he wrote to his friend:

'*S.S. Cecile*, off BOURNEMOUTH,
'*Aug.* 2, 1875. 11 P.M.

'MY DEAR MR. COSENS,—I am at this moment in sight of Bournemouth. With the glass I have been able to see quite distinctly the long line of houses on the Christchurch Road with the big red building. Christchurch rises out of the water as a very sharp landmark. We are about nine or ten miles off, midway between the point of Poole and the Needles.

'The whole past sad time comes up very vividly before me—indeed, it is never absent from me. I think of those cold, bitter, weary days six months ago, and I wonder I have not gone mad. I must have done so but for the firm conviction of a loving Father ordering all things well.

'It is a very singular thing that within a little more than four hours I have had in sight the three places in England which my wife visited for her health—Torquay, Bournemouth, and the Isle of Wight.

'At Torquay I went round all the places which her presence endeared, and there was a sort of sharp but pleasant pain in revisiting them and recalling the irrevocable past. And now Bournemouth is before me. I see the white cliffs on either side of the pier. I can dimly see the spot where we all stood together a short time ago. It forms a dark break between the white cliffs.

'The houses along the eastern cliff are visible to the naked eye, and ahead Christchurch, of your visit to which, with her, she wrote me so pleasant an account.

'In an hour or so we shall be passing close to Ventnor, a place likewise intensely interesting to me from old and dear recollections.

'I think I told you that I spent the Assembly time with my old and now lonely mother, and that I was greatly the better of seeing how bravely she bore up under her trouble.'

The *Cecile* anchored off Gravesend, where Dr. Mac Gregor and Mr. Binnie left her. The Doctor went to London, and from there he paid a visit to his friends the Smiths at Tangley, near Guildford. As usual he had his eyes on the country through which he was being driven. 'This is quite a different world from Scotland. Singularly mild climate. Vines covering the houses and grapes ripening in the open air. Clematis, purple wistaria, beautiful cottages, and large commons along the road.'

He took the chair at a meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society and gave the address, and from Guildford went back to London to pay a visit to the Baroness Burdett Coutts at Holly Lodge. 'Found the Baroness and Mrs. Brown at lunch. Got from them both a very warm reception. Drank my health, touching glasses. The Baroness took me through the conservatory. I drove back to Charing Cross, to leave for Gravesend, in a thunderstorm and terrific downpour of rain.'

On the 9th of August the yacht and the party on board her began their journey to the north. On the 11th they were

at Granton. Dr. Mac Gregor went to Edinburgh to find everything well, and returning to Granton went on with the yacht to Aberdeen. 'Parted there from our good friends of the *Cecile* with mutual regret. A most delightful cruise. Called on Dr. Spence, and through his telescope saw her ploughing her way to the north.'

He wandered about Inverness-shire and Ross-shire, calling on old friends and preaching in their churches. He was with Dr. Mackenzie, and notes how the people were attached to him and attended his church. 'People speak as if the thin end of the wedge were piercing Free Churchism.' From a Free Church minister he hears of the remarkable progress of the Church of Scotland. From the manse at Dingwall he drove up the beautiful valley of Strathpeffer, and he also saw Strathconon, which had been the scene of the ministry of his friend of Paisley days, Dr. Cameron Lees. He summed up for himself what he had observed and heard in these regions, as to the spiritual condition of the people, and their attitude towards the Church :

'Highland Free Church persistence seems slowly sapping. The condition of the Highlands spiritually is like Roman Catholic Ireland. The people are under the rule of the ministers here. There, of the priests. Ministers speak of their personal kindness, and admire their loyalty to the cause.

'General impression that the forces at work will within the next twenty years effect a great change. There should be a widespread movement to bring them over. The coming of Southern ministers among them does them good.'

He preached in Dingwall. 'The church quite full, a thing they say unknown since the Disruption. Many Free Church people present.'

He attended a service in the Free Church, sat near Dr. Kennedy, and again preached in the Parish Church on the openness of the way of Salvation. 'Left Dingwall very tired.'

The significance of all he had accomplished during this visit it is difficult to appreciate at a distance of nearly forty

years. The Highlands had been practically a sealed book, as far as the power and influence of the Church of Scotland were concerned. It was a time when, if the Apostle Paul had preached from the pulpits of the National Church, no Highlander belonging to the Free Church would have believed himself orthodox had he crossed the threshold to hear him. The people were in the grip of a zealous but intensely bitter order of Free Church ministers, and they followed their bidding with a loyalty as blindly devoted as ever they had given to their feudal chieftains. In the Highlands the ministers of the Church of Scotland had lost the majority of their people, and they were regarded with suspicion, treated with neglect, and they suffered with a patience and quiet confidence in their cause, which had its reward. In the Lowlands the National Church had been built up and restored to something approaching its ancient unity and power, but before the date at which Dr. Mac Gregor made these notes, after moving about and preaching in the Highland churches, not much had been hoped or looked for in these regions.

The years that saw the ordination of James Mac Gregor had seen a band of men enter the ministry of the National Church, who were all destined with him to play a great part in infusing an evangelical fervour into her services and life.

The age of the Disruption leaders was passing, and between 1855 and 1861 a succession of men entered the ministry, whose ability, faith, and zeal profoundly moved the Church. 'Their very names,' said the Very Reverend Dr. Mitford Mitchell, preaching at the dedication of the Charteris Memorial Church in May 1912, 'send a thrill through your heart—James Mac Gregor, Marshall Lang Cameron Lees, Donald Macleod, Archibald Charteris Robert Herbert Story, Robert Flint, Archibald Scott Norman and John Macleod.'

Had the lines of Dr. Mac Gregor been cast in some Highland district, what might not the effect have been! His indomitable belief in the Church of his fathers, his appeal

to the clans 'to return,' might have turned even the heart of the stubbornest Free Kirker. Destiny had called him otherwise, and his Celtic fire had been at the service of the National Church in the great centres of Scottish life and thought.

'*August* 28.—Writing all morning, got my sermon done before dinner—unusual thing for me. The subject was one congenial to my present state. Have got back this week from my holiday very much stronger than when I left. May God guide me to keep the health to which I have been restored, and use it more and more for His glory. My one desire is that my life may be consecrated to His service.'

While in Edinburgh he received a letter from the Duke of Argyll fixing the date of his arrival at Inveraray, and preferring a request which cannot have been altogether unexpected:

'INVERARAY, *Sept.* 11, 1875.

'MY DEAR DR. MAC GREGOR,—As we hope to see you here on Sat. the 18th, we hope also that, if you are not tired, we may have the benefit of your conducting service in the church on Sunday 19th. The minister is ill and never appears, the pulpit being occupied by a young man—a rather unfortunate position for the parish. If, however, you should require rest, pray don't think of what we should otherwise like so much in this matter.—Yours very truly,

'ARGYLL.'

From Gourock he left with Mrs. Gamble and a party in the *Cecile* for Inveraray:

'Came round in six hours, eleven knots an hour—a delightful day. Drove with Mrs. Gamble and party to Loch Awe; saw them off on their return. Then went to the castle, and got the very kindest reception from the Duke and Duchess. The homeliest and the most unpretending of men. Walked out after luncheon and drove with Lady Victoria.

'At dinner there were the Princess Louise and the Marquis of Lorne, Prince Leopold, Lord and Lady Dufferin, Lord Colin, Mr. Campbell of Islay, and a large family party. I was placed between the Duke and the Princess.'

The impressions of that earliest meeting with the Doctor are an abiding memory to the circle that he first saw in their 'own beautiful Inveraray,' as he ever called it in speaking of their home to those he met in the autumn of 1875. From the first moment that they came under his penetrating and merry glance, as he took stock of that sisterhood and endeavoured rapidly to master their names and characteristics, there sprang up between him and them a warm and intimate friendship. Time and space made no difference in his loving interest in their changing lives and destinies. Four of the family were to pass into the silent land before his call came. He mourned for each as for a relative of his own. Their troubles were his, and very literally he entered into their joys. He styled himself their guardian, and they, in return, gave him his name in the Gaelic rendering, a first-fruit of the classes which he held with them for the learning of this language. 'Dr. Hamish' was a name soon in universal use.

When he arrived at the castle the Duke and Duchess were sitting in the garden, and the Doctor walked out to meet them. The sunshine of a clear September day was over all things. He had driven with his friends from the *Cecile* to get the first sight of Loch Awe, and his love of scenery had had its fill. He had traversed the pass of the Aray to the watershed and back again to Loch Fyne—a scene the Duke was never tired of showing to his guests.

He was now to meet in the Duke one whose love of Nature was as deep and reverent as his own. Had there been no other interest held in common, the love of the world around them would have made a close bond between these two remarkable men. Both of them loved Nature, and very specially the scenery of their own Highlands. Both of them saw it as God's 'fair creation,' and loved in it the evidences of divine law and order. Alike in a feeling for the poetry, the religion, and the history of their country, they found in their diverse aspects and outlook a congenial friendship. They had no sooner met than a close and great intimacy sprang up between them, the most unreserved and open which had

come into the life of either, a friendship acknowledged by both as having been most helpful to them through the long years in which they were to enjoy each other's society.

It is hard to describe the appearance of Dr. Mac Gregor as seen then by his new friends. At that time he was forty-three years of age, in the very prime of his life. In stature he was exceedingly short, though the defect was only noticeable when he walked. He moved quickly, with a lame gait, but he could go long distances on foot, and showed great endurance in walking expeditions. 'There is the lame minister,' he overheard some one in Edinburgh say as he passed by. 'The lame man, not the lame minister,' was his immediate comment on the remark.

Any sense of his personal defect was soon forgotten. His figure was well made and very spare, and he held himself with an erect and free carriage. There was something extraordinarily riveting in the intense vitality of his presence. The head was finely modelled and set on his shoulders. He had a square, wide brow and thick, black, curling hair, which he kept closely cropped. His deep, blue eyes were as lights set in the virile, sensitive face. They appeared to see everything near at hand; they could blaze with sudden fire, and yet in an instant the vision of the land that was very far off would fix them in a dreamy, rapt intensity. Their colour was a disputed point. Sir George Reid, who painted him, called them of a forget-me-not blue. The Duke used to tell him he had only seen their exact colour reproduced in one of his beloved birds—the jackdaw!

He once submitted his head to one whom he called 'a monomaniac as to phrenology.' Writing a humorous account of it to his future wife, he said:

'If his report be true, go down on your knees and thank a kind providence for having sent you a perfect paragon of a husband. The grey eyes are the index of great nervous power. Even the bulging-out nose is a mark of intellect! I was particular to ask about self-esteem, and to your astonishment, and somewhat I must confess to my own, was informed it was no more than the usual size!

'Amid all this gammon, the fellow said one true thing. Above the eyes somewhere there is indication of a great love of nature—the ideal beauty, ideal truth, leading me to dreaming by day about the beauties of God's world of matter and of mind.'

A dark and closely trimmed beard and moustache emphasised the constant movement of his mouth. He seemed to hear with his lips, and they could often be seen moving as he eagerly caught and rapidly repeated to himself the words to which he was listening. He had what he called 'the Mac Gregor nose.' A phrenologist might have classed it as of a type denoting great pugnacity.

The complexion was extremely pallid and gave a general appearance of delicacy, only belied by the brilliancy of his eyes, set under the strongly marked brows. He had the voice of a born orator, resonant and clear, with a bell-like cadence. His intonation was strongly Highland, but he had no pronounced accent. He rolled his 'Rs' in a way no Saxon could ever attempt, and he had a fine contempt for the misuse of that letter by the English. You say, 'For yares and yares,' whereas you should say, 'For yeearrs and yeearrs.'

An American, hearing this rolling intonation of the letter R, commented upon it and got a straight answer from the preacher:

'I revel in it, and entirely object to this valuable and inoffensive letter being thrown out of the alphabet by the average Englishman, or used only in the wrong place. I suppose ninety-nine out of every hundred English clergymen say, "Victori*ar*, our Queen and governor." See that you Americans don't follow this bad example.'

The use of the lips in pronunciation, and the art of voice production, he was always inculcating on his pupils at Inveraray, and on the many assistants who passed through his hands, and whose reading and enunciation he would reproduce in their hearing with a startling faithfulness. Very heartily did the Doctor agree with the Duke when he said he always knew if the sermon was going to be a good

or a bad one by the way the preacher read the lessons from Scripture.

The orator's voice, like that of the singer, is a gift, and is not to be manufactured, and it was the range of his voice and the perfect use to which it was put that made the Doctor the outstanding speaker of his time. It would have been interesting to hear it attuned to subject and method within the walls of Parliament. Probably he would have been great in a speech on the second reading of some measure which appealed to his passionate convictions; but in debate, as he never suffered the contradiction of sinners without being led away into fiery denunciation, the arts of peaceful persuasion would certainly have left him.

In person the Doctor was conspicuous for his neatness and the care of his clothes. 'Surely neatness is as cheap as untidiness. Water and soap are not costly articles in this country,' was a comment he made on one who had displeased his fastidious sense in these matters. Orderliness and neatness are not common attributes where the Celt abides, but Dr. Mac Gregor had a sense of both, and it vexed him greatly to remain in any spot, or to be engaged in any work, where these qualities were absent. His writing-table was free of all litter, and his papers were arranged and kept with a method which alone justified the number he preserved. His *Index Rerum*, an indexed book, gave him the subject and the year of most of them. His sermons were stitched, his paper ruled, and his books put into paper covers by his own hands. He knew his weakness, and would laughingly say how he felt it a compelling duty to sit down to some neat bit of handicraft when his head should have been occupied by composition, or his feet directed on some other road than that which led to his beloved and retired study.

There remains but his laugh to be recalled. It was in itself infectious, even if the hearer of it were unaware of the joke in hand. He had a rare sense of humour and was not afraid to make use of it, even when in the presence of the most serious subject. Always the boy of any company he was in, delighted with every bit of fun and merry jest

at the naval review on Loch Long
The only peculiar Uniform was taken by
Hamish MacGregor who sat on the side
of the Boat his sword Dragging in the
water otherwise he was not Easily
to be distinguished from a naval
commander

By Lord Archibald Campbell.

wherever he was, there would be heard the 'roars of laughter' he loved to provoke and to share in. His presence was as welcome in the smoking as in the drawing-room, and he had his own way of making humorous conversation keep the bounds of taste and propriety. His interest and excitement in the events of everyday life, his buoyant spirits and genial kindness to young and old, 'all things to all men' in every sense of the word, came as new life into that circle of friends.

He gave as much as he gained by contact with a home full of interests and anxieties, both public and private. His warm affection went out to the young people, the youngest of whom was very little older than the child he had lost, and it is natural that his diary of this time is full of thoughts concerning the family who had taken him into their intimate midst, and given him all their confidence.

There are many letters which tell of what each felt on looking back. Writing near the end of his life to Lady Mary Glyn, 'Dr. Hamish' says of those days: 'None of you will ever know what you were in my life at that time.' While among the letters he preserved was one written by one of that band:

'Years may wax and wane between our meetings, but we have no way to make up; and the friendship, now seventeen years old, seems to me as strong and fresh as in that first year when it was made. I see now my first sight of you the day that you arrived at Inveraray.

'I look upon you as one of the deepest influences in my life, and I often pray that the going out and coming in of "Dr. Hamish" may be blessed.'

What impression he produced on his fellow-guests is best summed up in the words of Dr. Story:

'I am quartered beside Dr. Mac Gregor in the castle. I had met him before, but had never really known him, and making his intimate acquaintance is one of the pleasantest features of this pleasantest of my visits to Inveraray.

'He is a man of genius, and with that touch of nature which makes the whole world kin. He loves a joke and a

smoke and everything and everybody that is worth the loving.'

On the 19th the Doctor preached in the Parish Church of Inveraray, and he notes that his place in St. Cuthberts was to be filled by Professor Flint. He preached on the text, 'In the fulness of time.' 'The guests at the castle were present. The church was pretty full.' The people at Inveraray were not unaccustomed to hear good preaching. The Duke never had any of the clergy staying at the castle without having them asked to fill the pulpit of the Parish Church; and if their principles or their bigotry prevented their entering the national Zion, there was a large Pavilion in which congregations gathered and heard Dr. Guthrie, Bishop Wilberforce, and other 'lights' in the ecclesiastical world.

It was long since the Parish Church had had its pulpit filled by such a preacher. The Duke alone of the party had heard the oratory and fervour of Dr. Mac Gregor. To his family, little accustomed to hear a living message, it came as a revelation of what preaching could be. The sermon was arresting and entrancing in its powerful presentment of what that 'fulness of time' meant in the history of the Roman and Jewish world.

Prince Leopold left the next day, 'shaking hands all round, very kindly; a most excellent young man.' The next entry in the diary concerned the Gaelic lessons he had instituted in the castle. He found a lamentable ignorance of the Gaelic language, and when he found a defect his energetic spirit never rested if the remedy lay with him. He ordained that a class should be formed, and that he should be the dominie. His pupils were willing, and at a table round, in a quiet library turret, he installed himself with six students more intent on having a good time with their master than in studying the rules of grammar, which he explained with lucid and vivacious illustration.

Lady Constance Emmott writes:

Can it really be thirty-seven years since Dr. Hamish first

dawned upon my childhood's life? It was during his first visit to my parents at Inveraray that, on my knuckles first—but not last—fell his chastising ruler, when, and as the youngest of an unruly class to whom he undertook to teach Gaelic, my performances came far short of his expectations, or my spirits rose far above what was permissible even under so fun-loving and merciful a dominie. To this day I can never hear or say the opening words of the twenty-third Psalm without hearing that resonant voice rolling out the musical cadence of:

'"Is e Dia féin a's buachaill dhomh,
Cha bhi mi ann an dìth,
Bheir e fainear gu 'n laighinn sios
Air cluainibh glas le sìth."'

Only one of those scholars took seriously to heart his admonition that Gaelic ought to be as much part of their lives as was their Highland ancestry, and that one never rested till she had mastered the language of the people to whom her life was given.

The arrival of Queen Victoria on her visit to the castle was the next point of interest. The officers commanding the volunteers called out to meet the Queen dined at the castle, and next day the Doctor saw the placing of the regiments in the grounds. From the top of the castle he watched the signal flag which showed the approach of the Royal guests:

'The carriage with four greys appeared, and came slowly between lines of military. The sight from the bridge very fine. Inveraray full of people. After luncheon Dr. Story, Dr. Macleod, and myself, walked to the top of Duniquaich; pleasant chat beguiling the way. The view was magnificent. Did not see the young ladies who were waving their handkerchiefs to us.

'*September* 24.—After lunch the Duke and Duchess drove Macleod and myself to the castle of Dunderawe. On the doorway is the inscription: "Behauld the End of all. Be nocht wiser than the Hiest. Hope in God."

'A ball at night. Sir William Jenner and I looked on at it moralising. The Queen wore a very becoming dress, and it was a brilliant scene.'

The Doctor wrote down later his recollections of the talks in the smoking-room :

'It was a merry time for the three clergymen who were naturally much together. The only one of the three who at that time had the honour of being a Royal chaplain was Dr. Macleod. He was informed early in the week by the Duke that it would fall to him to conduct worship probably in the castle the following Sunday.

'It was quite manifest to the two friends that the consciousness of this duty to be done marred for him in some measure the perfect abandon of the time. They chaffed Macleod, I especially repeatedly telling him "Never to mind, that the Queen was just a woman, and to be faithful."

'On the Friday the Duke informed Dr. Macleod that it was the Queen's desire I should conduct the service. The incubus accordingly was rolled on to me, and I in turn clearly manifested to my friends that the duty before me detracted somewhat from the perfect enjoyment and freedom of the time.

'Thereupon Dr. Macleod turned the tables, and told me never to mind, "The Queen is just a woman, and to be faithful." "That was very true when the burden lay on your shoulders, but you see it is very different now, for the case being altered, alters the case."

'The gift of telling stories seems hereditary in ministers of the Church of Scotland, especially those of the old school.

'The smoking-room became famous as the rendezvous of the best story-tellers in the castle, and was in consequence nightly filled; Prince Leopold and Lord Dufferin being frequent visitors, the latter contributing greatly to the enjoyment, not merely by the admirable stories he told, but by the charming way in which he told them.

'A ghost story related by me which I had heard as a true incident from the late Rev. Julian Young, son of the famous tragedian, had to be repeated to a large party in the drawing-room.

'An account of these goings-on was given by Dr. Story in *Good Words*. It was in that article that Dean Stanley first saw the story of Ticonderoga. It greatly struck him, as everything human was sure to do. So much, indeed, was he impressed by it, that when on a visit to America he went far out of his way to visit the spot where the hero of the story fell.

'My conversations with the young ladies, especially Lady Elisabeth and Lady Victoria, are very interesting. They are all good girls, desirous to do right in all things, but troubled with difficulties. What a pity they have not some one to whom to pour out their young hearts!

'Spent some time with Lord Dufferin, who has been far from well. He invited both Story and myself to visit him in Canada.

'*Sept.* 26.—Service in the dining-room of the castle at 11.45. The Queen present. My subject, "The Temptation." Dr. Macleod took the worship in the evening.

'*Sept.* 27.—Saw the Queen planting two trees in the grounds: a cedar and a fir-tree. Most of the household present. Lord Colin and I got some fishing in the Shira in the afternoon. I caught some sea-trout. I also fished in the Aray with the Duke and got more sea-trout. The Queen asked if we had been successful. Out next day with Lord Colin. Lost two fine salmon, but landed one. His thoughtful kindness very great. I gave him a hearing for sitting at lunch with wet feet.

'Professor Blackie arrived to-night. Great fun in smoking-room with the minister, Mr. MacPherson, and Islay on "Ossian."

'Ian Campbell of Islay had some other Gaelic lore to impart to him on the Clan Mac Gregor.

'"Cnuic is uilc is Artairich — ach cuin a thainig Ailpeinich?" which, being translated, is, "Hills and ills and Arthurites, but when came Alpinites?" It is a common Gaelic fashion to string together a lot of things as if they were of the same breed. A man lately said to me:

'"Muileach, is Ileach, is deamhan,
Triuir is miosa th' air an Domhain:
'S mios' am Muileach n'an t-Ileach,
'S mios' an t-Ileach n'an deamhan,"

which being translated is:

'"Mull-man, Islay-man, and devil,
Three worst beings in creation.
Worse the Mull-man than the Islay,
Worse the latter than the devil."

'The old saw quoted above means to express the opinion of the general public in the West, which is that Clan Alpine is a very old Scottish tribe.

'Hills (are old) ills are, and they are associated with Clan Arthur, who are the oldest branch of the Campbell tribe. But, old and evil as they are, the enemy is older and worse.

'So it is said somewhere of one of the Colin branch of the Arthur O Duin tribe, who fell upon the Clan Alpine, and took their lands of old.

'This man was a great justiciar, and he caused to be hanged Gregor the son of Gregor and fifteen of his accomplices. I think it was a mistake!'

Dr. Mac Gregor kept a copy of some notes that Dr. Herbert Story of Rosneath made at the time of the Queen's visit to Inveraray. In these he says:

'Mac Gregor had service in the dining-room. Preached a powerful sermon on the "Temptation." The conception of the devil and his contact with Christ's pure nature was very vividly shown.

'The Queen sat in front and was very attentive, but it is understood that she does not believe in a personal devil, and therefore could not sympathise with the arguments of the sermon. The Prince did not believe in him, hence, according to the Duke, Her Majesty's scepticism on this point.

'*Sept.* 29.—The Queen left in great spirits in a shower of rain; she said she thought it would clear up. She kissed the young ladies all round.

'After she had gone the Duke drove me to Rob Roy Mac Gregor's house (always spoken of as "the Doctor's distinguished kinsman") in pelting rain. He said I was to come and visit him every year.

'*Sept.* 30.—Story and I left the castle. Kind parting wishes from all, after a most pleasant and profitable sojourn.

'The drive over the great pass to Lochgoilhead and the sail to Kilcreggan full of memories.'

He returned to his work with renewed strength. The contact with so much that was free of all associations with the past did him much good, the more perhaps that he was little conscious how he had been taken out of himself.

He sent a library of Gaelic grammars to his dear pupils, and besought them to write to him 'with the pens which,' he said, 'were never weary—fast, rushing, and atrociously held.' Perhaps for their example, his own handwriting

notably improved in his large correspondence with the class.

Lady Elisabeth, whose love of languages made a great bond between him and her, wrote to acknowledge the arrival of the books :

'*Oct.* 1875.—Many thanks for your kind present of the Gaelic books, which arrived yesterday. All your Gaelic class received them with great applause. I need nothing to remind me of the kindness and patience of my Gaelic master, but the present is doubly valuable to me for the words written in it by my friend as well as teacher.

'Surely never professor sat in a class so insubordinate and riotous! But also I am very sure that none ever left so happy a memory of his lessons, or a truer, deeper regret that for the present, at least, we cannot profit by them any more.

'We all hope that you will come back to us some day, and you shall not find us unprepared. I do not at all want to give up Gaelic study.'

The Duchess answered the letter he wrote her after his departure—'What you say of your time here is very grateful to me, and we trust it is the beginning of that blessed thing—a real friendship.'

His occupations during October this year were as varied and widespread as ever. He took services in Glasgow, and presided at a dinner given to the Presbytery by Mrs. Gamble, on the occasion of the induction of Mr. M'Culloch to Gourock. Dr. Mac Gregor proposed the health of the giver of the feast. At an evening soirée, on the same occasion, he gave an address on 'Music and Church Service, advocated a Liturgy.' After these efforts he says he rested with Mr. Binnie, and read the *Pickwick Papers*. He had found his home life impossible without some one to manage his household affairs and look after his personal comfort. He was fortunate in securing the services of a lady who proved herself an efficient and devoted friend. Miss Cumming became for a few years the gentle and hospitable guardian of Dr. Mac Gregor's house in Cumin Place.

He had been summoned to preach at Balmoral in October. 'Left at the Queen's desire to preach in Crathie Church.

Such kindliness and feeling to ask me to preach to her so soon again. She did not agree with a word of the sermon I preached at Inveraray.'

'Got a compartment to myself all the way to Aberdeen, and looked over my work. Much in thought with dear Helen, who last year went with me on the same journey.

'Mr. Campbell and I went to call on General Ponsonby at the castle. Midway up the avenue saw the Queen and Princess Beatrice walking down, John Brown behind, carrying their wraps. We drew to one side to let them pass, and stood with hats off. The Queen came up to me and spoke most pleasantly of the very untoward weather they had had for some time on Deeside. She asked how I was, and what kind of weather we had in Edinburgh. She then went up to Mr. Campbell, and told him of the death of the English cook whom he had visited, and who on his death-bed had repeated to his wife words which Mr. Campbell had spoken to him.

'Preached next day on "The Divine Decrees"; began quite comfortably, and free from nervousness, but did not get on so well towards end. Lunched with the court. Sat between Lady Errol and Miss Cadogan. Lady Errol a staunch Presbyterian of the strictest type. Dislikes all improvement in Church service as tending towards Ritualism. But said plainly she would like the Church festivals kept instead of our non-observed fast-days.

'The Queen sent for me after lunch. I was shown into the drawing-room, where twice before I had met Her Majesty. In a few minutes she opened the door and slipped in so quietly that I was hardly aware of her presence.

'I stepped forward to meet her when she at once began to speak, as if thinking aloud and resuming a conversation which we had before. Her very first words were about my loss and how much she felt for me, comparing her own trouble with mine, when in the sight of God all are on the same footing of perfect equality.'

Through Lady Ely the Queen asked for a copy of the sermon which he had preached, and which Her Majesty had liked so much:

'The Queen wishes to know if it could not be printed, as Her Majesty thinks it would be so comforting and

cheering to so many people. The Queen is aware that you have so much to do, and would only suggest this, and ask if some of your sermons might not be compiled in a small volume.'

To Lady Ely the Doctor answered:

'Engrossed as I have been in heavy parochial charges, I have never been able to bestow the time and thought on my sermons which would warrant me to give them to the public of my own accord.

'The expression, however, of Her Majesty's wish, sacred at all times to her subjects and peculiarly so to me from the tender sympathy shown me in my great enduring distress, overcomes the strong reluctance I have ever had to publication, and my faith in the soundness of Her Majesty's judgment leads me to hope that a little volume might do some good. I shall therefore attempt it if my indifferent health will permit.'

In November the Argyll family passed through Edinburgh. The Duke wrote to him, 'Only two of your elder pupils will be with us, but the younger ones are still following your Celtic teaching. If there is not steady labour, there are at least spurts of enthusiasm!'

He constituted himself guide to the family, who were not, he thought, sufficiently conversant with the historic sights of Edinburgh. 'With the Duke and Duchess saw Greyfriars' churchyard, which I had never before seen. I saw with them the martyrs' monument, and the stone on which the Covenant was signed.'

The remainder of the winter passed in his usual occupations. His mind was much exercised in endeavouring to prevent one of his flock from joining the Roman Catholic Church:

'She has somehow got hold of all the stock arguments, the unity and continuity of the Church. I have tried earnestly to impress on her the fact that her reason is God's divinest gift to her, that she is exercising that reason in coming to the conclusion to abandon it for ever on the most momentous of all concerns—that of religion.

'It is very noticeable that on this day I have met two

ladies in good position, of good education, and of good life—the one a Protestant getting peace in Romanism, the other a Roman Catholic seeking and finding peace in spiritualism, and both within an hour or two quoting identical texts of Scripture in support of their views.

'At Mrs. Aitken's I dined with the Earl and Countess of Caithness, and her son the Duke of Medina. The Countess is one of the most rabid of spiritualists. Believing me to be receptive of the esoteric or inner doctrine, she poured into my ear in copious and felicitous language the most extraordinary nonsense which it has ever been my lot to hear. I got the Countess and her son to give me a lesson in Spanish pronunciation, the second I ever had, the former being from the Spanish Consul. They both expressed themselves astonished at the accuracy of my reading, but the Countess explained in a whisper, that in my previous state of existence I had been a Spaniard. She told me of a person who far surpassed me, because she read and spoke Spanish fluently without ever having learnt a word of it. How true the remark of the old Scottish minister, "It taks a' kinds o' queer craturs to mak a warld."

'*Nov.* 8, 1875.—Dined to-night along with the elders at Dr. Veitch's. Heard Maurice Lothian tell that he had seen the following lines written by Cranston himself somewhere in Parliament House; it being prefaced that Cranston, a man of great ability, had desired the seat on the Bench which was given to Murray of Cringletie, his inferior in intellect but his superior in influence:

> '"Necessity and Cringletie tally to a tittle,
> Necessity knows no law and Cringletie as little."

'*Nov.* 10, 1875.—Had a long talk with Lord Provost Falshaw and Dr. Sidey on drains, the great question of the future. There is some talk of drunkenness being legislated on. The first question should be, "What leads to drunkenness?" "Filthy, ill-drained, and ill-ventilated homes."

'Hard visiting amongst my people—Charlotte Square and George Street—thirteen families. Visited overmuch, being at it every day. *Festina lente* should be my motto.'

He went to St. Andrews to help Dr. Boyd on his Fast Day: 'Had great pleasure in my visit and in meeting Principal Shairp for the first time. Formed a very high opinion of

him—a genial, gentle, scholarly, lovable man. Have been revising Hebrew—going over the grammar and reading it a little.'

A. K. H. B. also had his reminiscences of this visit:

'Mac Gregor, Shairp, and I set out on the never-wearying "round of the ruins." Often, since then, has Mac Gregor recalled that day. It was blazing summer. Shairp was at his brightest and Mac Gregor was effervescent with stories of old College days, and with marvellous specimens of the sermons to which the students had then to listen. Og, King of Bashan, somebody had stated, was five miles in height. "But this is plainly impossible. For had it been so, while his feet were burning in the heat of the tropics, his middle would have been enjoying a temperate climate, and his head would have been covered with perpetual snow." A discourse on Enoch began with the statement, "Walking is that motion of the body by which we transport ourselves from one point in space unto another."'

The letters which came to him concerning his work were far-reaching. 'Let me thank you,' writes a woman-worker in the mission-field, 'for all you said for our Female Mission. What I do feel is altogether unutterable. I believe I am not mistaken in saying that this is the first time the mission has been recognised before the Church.'

He never forgot the Waldensian Church. Its history and its survival through centuries of persecution appealed strongly to him. In the Assembly and elsewhere he recalled the Church whose seed was the blood of many martyrs. 'I enclose a cheque for ten guineas, for the good old Waldensian Church,' wrote a friend. 'I admire your powers, and listened to your thrilling address on it. One word of advice—husband your strength. The fire that is within may glow too fiercely for a frame not too strong.'

The Rev. David Guthrie wrote from the Free Church Manse, Liberton, 'I am glad that you, like my dear father, swear by the Waldenses. I wish he had been spared to be your colleague in 1872-73 in Rome.'

Dr. Charteris watched him, knowing well what he, his

friend, had passed through, and the high tension at which he lived. 'You have done much good work, and there is yet much in the future which you alone seem best capable of doing. My whole afternoon yesterday was occupied with one whom your sermon a few weeks ago, on the simplicity of the way of salvation, had awakened to a new light and, I trust, a new life. I cannot help telling you this instance in the work of your ministry.'

A minister who had been called to a larger parish in Perthshire wrote to him with a strong sense of the importance of the parish he was leaving, and with small regard to the position Dr. Mac Gregor was now occupying in the Church.

'The Manse, *Dec.* 1875.

'Dear Dr. Mac Gregor,—Owing to my acceptance of ——, *this* parish will be vacant in a few weeks. Very general circulation has been given to a rumour that you might be disposed to accept a *unanimous call* to it. How the rumour originated I have not ascertained, but I am asked to say that if you are prepared to exchange the city of Edinburgh for this quiet, rural parish, there is no doubt whatever of your receiving a most cordial invitation. To me, personally, nothing in connection with my prospective translation would be so gratifying. If *you* come, this parish will be saved an immense amount of trouble. If you do not, I greatly fear that there is considerable danger of a splendid congregation being distracted by the claims of competing candidates.'

To this the Doctor answered:

'The rumour to which I owe the pleasure of your letter of the 14th can be explained only on the principle so forcibly expressed by Shakespeare—"Lord! what a world it is for lying."'

The letter was annotated:

'There must be some terrible liars in the world, as I had not known that the parish was vacant till I got the above letter.'

One more letter of this period may be given, one that is not the least practical:

'CAMPBELLTOWN, TASMANIA.

'I cannot forget all you did for me and the good advice you gave me before I left home, especially not to forget God when I got well. My mother in her last letter wrote me what she remembered of your sermon. You little thought when you delivered it that some portion of it would be the means of comforting a weary soul on the other side of the globe.

'I have often thought of the business matters of which I told you. I can tell you business men cannot be told enough of purity in commercial dealings. I have written my partner that on my return I have made up my mind that I will conduct my business in an upright and true manner, without heeding what others do. There are practices in my business which the world may wink at, and men give way to them who ought to know better.'

The last weeks of the year 1875 were full of sad anniversary memories. 'Preached to a crowded church on "Faith, Hope, and Charity." How much more of my time should preaching occupy than it does, when God is giving me such opportunities of doing good. All last week I had not a moment to myself.'

On Christmas Day he was remembered from Inveraray. The Duchess wrote, 'Every Christmas blessing to you—Presbyterian though you be. I suppose the Reformers kept their own birthdays!'

On New Year's Eve, he writes:

'Here ends the most fateful year of my life. They are all gone, the dear familiar faces, and I am left alone. Also my dear, prayerful old father. They have passed before me into the world of light. My God, support me! My God, confirm my faith! With all of them it is well, and as for me, do with me what Thou wilt. I thank Thee for them all—safe at home. What a changed home on earth, but how much brighter and nearer is heaven! It has been a long, long year.'

'Begin this year 1876 with more faith' is his short comment on what lay before him. He gave his mind to his study, and there were days when he was absorbed with the

subjects on which he preached. He went more into social life, and took all the good of new and old acquaintances. 'Reading Hebrew and Arabic with Mr. Robertson of Beyrout,' and he speaks of a dinner-party with Dr. Hanna. 'Met Professor Fraser—very pleasant and profitable.' He invited Dr. Veitch to dine with him, and his colleague answered:

'DEAR SIR,—I 'll try. But you are attempting an essay of very doubtful issue—"a very quiet dinner with Phin!" —Very truly yours, W. VEITCH.'

'Called on Charteris and Alison about Formula,' and a letter from Dr. Charteris shows the line of their mutual work:

'That Confession of Faith is near my heart, and I want your counsel for my own sake and the Church's too. I hear that a very broad Church attack on the Creed is arranged for, and it seems to me that the ground you took up in your address to the licentiates yesterday is the true ground to take. This is a critical time, because sides will be taken at this Assembly on the subject. Like you, I am on middle ground, and I think Dr. Pirie could be brought to it.'

Before January was past he went to Scone: 'Found mother waiting for me, in wonderful health and spirits. What marvellous elasticity she has, and what wonderful faith! Writing most of the day at mother's on "Death," the scriptural theory of it. Found much comfort in the company of my dear old mother, who is so calm and self-possessed.'

In February he was back at his resting-place in Gourock. Here there appears the first notice of what was the dream of his life, and which he was to live to see accomplished—the Restoration of the ruins of Iona. 'Met Mr. and Mrs. Richardson at dinner. Spoke of Iona. Hope something will be done.'

One of the elders in the West Church died very suddenly. He felt it deeply, and wrote to the Duke, giving up a visit he had purposed making to Inveraray. The Duke answered him—'Yes, Death is always reaping, and as one grows

older one lives more and more with those who have gone before.'

Both Dr. Warburton Begbie and Dr. Simson, who had tended his wife and child, were dying, and his mind was much with them, and especially with Dr. Simson, who was an elder in the Tron, whom he visited frequently. When both had passed away, he paid a tribute to their memory in his Sunday sermon. He preached twice this year to crowded audiences of students, and to the Edinburgh Missionary Association, when the collection amounted to sixty-eight pounds. In the Assembly Hall he addressed two hundred of the graduates. There was another proposal that he should go to America, but he definitely refused. He wrote to Lady Mary Campbell, on receiving some family photographs, 'They will remind me when I get dumpy of a pleasant place and a pleasant time, and of my dear, delightful pupils, whom, with their father and mother and all dear to them, may God have in His holy keeping now and evermore.'

He thought it wrong to be 'dumpy,' and strove against all depression, as a state neither profitable nor wise, but it is impossible not to realise what a hard battle it was for him at this time to keep on with the routine of his work, and to preserve an equable spirit. He had been uplifted and carried through his troubles in a manner which could hardly endure, and in the loneliness of his life, and lack of the stimulus of daily intimacy and intercourse, his heart failed him as he went the daily round.

He kept his anniversaries:

'*March* 17, 1876.

'To-day, my dear child has been a year in Heaven. I have been busy all day among the papers and letters and little relics which bring her to my fond remembrance. I recall her face exquisite in its sleep. And this is the last of her till the day when I shall see her again and my heart shall rejoice.

'In her case as in her mother's the beautiful presence was but the index of the more beautiful soul, and surely the peace of the placid countenance is the earthly emblem of

that heavenly repose on which they too have entered. How greatly God has honoured me in taking away in such close succession the three beings who were nearest to me on earth; and now that a year has gone, a long and weary year, I look back upon my loved ones without any regret, blessing God that I have been able to leave them so calmly in His good and gracious Hand, and sorrowing only for this, that I have not better learned the lessons He has been reading to me.

'They have been taken from the evil to come; they have been spared the sore heart I bore and bear; they have been saved from the sin I sin; and if it were in my power by a movement of the will to have them back again, I would say, "No! leave them where they are; why should I selfishly mar their eternal repose?"'

His worn-out spirits occasionally revived and had vent—'Marriage here. Nice young man. She looked funny. Large, dreamy, dazed eyes. I thought to myself, "God help him!"'

'*May*.—Ormiston case. At Synod all day yesterday. It unanimously reversed the judgment of Dalkeith Presbytery on every count in the libel. Much struck with impatience of these Courts of Revision, and with the great ability of Wallace.

'*July* 1.—This week have been much exercised with spiritual things. How earnestly do I long for greater advance in holiness, for greater nearness to Christ, for greater fitness for Heaven.

'What a ceaseless struggle is the inner life! I trust there is always some progress. God help me to learn the lessons He has been teaching me.'

The Duke endeavoured to persuade him to join him in July on his yacht the *Columba*. He wrote to him: 'We begin our cruise to-day, not under favourable auspices, as it does not rain but pours, as it only can do in the tropics of Argyll.' A later letter says:

'We have just visited a place rarely seen—the island of Hinba in the life of Columba, now Eilean nan Naomh, where we have seen the little houses and oratories where Columba and his brethren retired to pray when they thought even Iona too much in the world.

'It is a lovely and curious spot, and the rude stone buildings (one of them a beehive shape) are about the most touching memorials I have seen of the early Christianity of these islands. I wish you had been with us.'

His next news from the yacht altered his plans. He went to Oban to join the party, and on arriving was met by a telegram from the Duke saying that the Duchess had been taken suddenly ill, and he was going back to Inveraray as soon as possible, and asking him to follow him there.

On the 1st of August the Doctor left Oban by coach:

'A beautiful morning, and the drive along the banks of Loch Etive fine beyond description. Ben Cruachan in all its majesty. Reached Inveraray at noon. Found that the news of the Duchess's illness had reached the castle. A large family party waiting in great anxiety.'

He remained through the month at the castle, and as the whole family soon arrived, he became intimate with those he had not met on his earlier visit. He mentions in his diary that he preached two Sundays in the Parish Church, and on one occasion ten members of the family were present. He had already become engrossed in 'the clan,' and the weeks in which he shared the burden of deep anxiety as well as the relief when health was to a certain extent re-established, increased the already great intimacy with those who always found his presence stimulating. He gave to one and all a comradeship, suited to the needs of each, and he was, in that period of trouble, 'a good gift' to each and all of those who made him feel that he was one of themselves. It was the best tonic for his own condition. He could not feel his loneliness in such a centre of life and work and ever changing interest, and the effect both at the time and on his future destiny was deep and lasting.

He kept a minute diary of each day. Some of these entries must have a place in this memoir, as they form so absorbing a part of his experience at this period in his history.

'The yacht arrived and was brought alongside the pier through Lord Archibald's exertions. He has one of the

finest faces I ever saw. His beautiful little girl here like Napoleon in face.

'What a delightful family! The devoted attachment of the Duke and his children very beautiful. I find the whole family are extensive letter-writers. Some of them at the writing-tables every hour of the day. All rapid, distinct writers, and all hold the pen wrongly. My attempts to put them right a source of amusement.

'What a world unknown to others is a family like this! Each with his own peculiar character and peculiar troubles.

'I have had frequent spells of fishing in the Aray, and for sea-trout in the Shira.

'Singular to say, though I have fished all my days more or less, I never caught till now the knack of throwing a long line. My mistake twofold. I threw the rod too far back, a back cast, and used too much strength for the throw. It 's a quick movement from the top of the rod that throws out the line. I had Lord Archibald's rod—first-rate. It is a delightful pastime.

'Went with the Duke and Lord Walter, and saw each of them shoot a fallow deer. Poor things; not a pleasant sight to me the look of the gentle creatures in the thraws of death.

'Had a long, two-handed crack with the Duke on science and religion. He is a good man, and a capital conversationalist.

'Heat very great. Sat out till after 11 P.M. Thermometer 80°. Star-gazing with the girls, and listening to the Duke reading poetry aloud. Enjoy reading Dante and Greek with Lady Elisabeth.

'*Aug.* 20.—Had a short parting interview with the Duchess. Commended her to God. A time of great anxiety to the family, which I shared. I bless God our fears disappointed and she is better. Surely God meant me to be a blessing to these bright young girls. May He ever keep them! They waved me as I left the castle a long and kind adieu. A mournful week in many ways. I felt leaving my dear friends at Inveraray, and passing by Lochgoilhead with all its sad yet tender associations. I desire to live for Christ and what is good.'

He returned by Rosneath to pay a visit to Dr. Story, and to answer the appeal sent him to preach:

'Happy man, flying over the country from Dan to Beersheba, and hobnobbing with prince and peer—the man of the period! You must on no account cheat me of your help on Sunday. You have been having a holiday, and I have had none since May—thirteen Sundays without a break—so I deserve a rest, not to speak of the benefit to my few sheep in the wilderness of hearing the great Mac Gregor.'

He preached to a crowded church, many coming from across the loch to hear him. His diary says: 'Dr. Story in evening. A powerful sermon on, "He who loveth not knoweth not God." It was clearly heretical according to Church standards. The denial of election.' He enjoyed the visit greatly, and was full of admiration for the castle and fine woods. In the manse of Rosneath good company was never lacking, and he says the talk was good, with excellent ghost stories. He was transported to Gourock on the *Cecile*, and from there wrote to the party at Inveraray. The Duchess answered him:

'What a kind letter I have to thank you for. I know progress must be slow, and it is an illness which ought to do one good, for it makes one realise how slight one's hold on this life is and will be. God grant the hold on that other life may be stronger. Thanks for your prayers. They are a great comfort to me. I am glad you enjoyed lovely Rosneath.'

To another member he wrote:

'ASHFORD, GOUROCK, *September* 1876.

'I came round here from your charming Rosneath on Tuesday in a small steam yacht, and return to Edinburgh to-morrow.

'My purpose in writing to-day is to narrate a little and homely incident which occurred last night, and which touched me not a little, leaving you to draw the moral. Taking a "constitutional" before dinner in a drenching rain, I came up with a humble working man to whom I wished a "good evening." The man walked alongside of me and began to talk, telling me the landlady of the house where he lived had died some little time ago. "That, my friend," I said, "is a road *we must* all go." "Yes," he said, "all but

those who shall be alive on the earth when He comes again." The word interested me and I replied, "I am glad to hear you speaking in that way." We talked a little amid the pelting rain about Christ's second coming, when he remarked, "Blessed are they who hear the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance." I noticed a strange, bright, happy light about the man's homely face, which struck me; and I said, "You seem to be rejoicing in that joyful sound of the Gospel?" "Yes," he said, "I am very happy, for I am trusting in my Saviour and humbly trying to serve Him. But some time ago," he went on to say, "it was very different. For months and months I was in the most dreadful misery, believing myself a lost man for whom there was no mercy. I could get no peace night nor day. But one Sunday I happened to go into Saltcoats Parish Church, and something that the minister said—it was nothing very particular—came home as true. 'That's true,' I said, 'that's true. I see that Christ is a Saviour.' From that moment I trusted Him. I am trusting Him still, and with His grace I will till the end. Life is now all changed to me, and I am the very happiest of men. No doubt many a temptation came to me to go back to the old life. But He kept by me and brought me out of a horrible pit, and from the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock. And there I hope to remain for ever."

'He then went on to say that no sooner had he found this new joy than he said to himself: "I must try to do something for Him who has done so much for me." And, casting about for something to do, he remembered an old friend who had gone very far astray through drink, and was then lying on a sick-bed, and hinting about ending himself. He said he stuck to that man for days and nights till God honoured him in being the instrument of effecting a great change, and, like himself, he is now a humble and earnest Christian. I asked him how he had dealt with him. "I just tellt' him," he said with a happy smile, "to look to Christ, to follow Christ, to trust in Christ." We shook hands together as we parted, mutually commending each other to God, and I ate my dinner with a happy heart. God be with you, dear Lady Frances, and give you all joy and peace in believing.'

The rest of September he spent at Barrogill Castle, visit-

ing the Earl and Countess of Caithness, and went with them to Thurso Castle. The scenery was all new to him:

'Railway route from Dingwall to Thurso was very interesting. The drive along the shores of the Dornoch Frith to Bonarbridge, the climb up to Lairg, and the peep of Loch Shin, then down to the Mound and Dunrobin Castle, very fine. At Helmsdale the railway strikes inland, passing for hours along the most bleak and barren moorland I have ever seen. I suppose there is not another such stretch of bog in Europe or in the world. The eye traverses vast, undulating breadths of bog, not a house or a tree in sight. Even the cultivated part of Georgemas looks bleak in the extreme, all wind swept. Dikes of flagstones.

'Was met by Mr. Hope Johnstone and Mr. Miller, the minister, and driven to Thurso Castle. It stands in a fine commanding position, the waves dashing up to the very windows, but too near the town and harbour. Scrabster roads and lights opposite; magnificent views of the Orkneys. I went to the top of the tower—seven stories; saw the Countess arrive driving, and waved to her.

'Walked out with Lady Sinclair and saw her patients. She has wonderful skill among them and great kindness. Inspected Scrabster lighthouse, thence to the promontory, Holburn Head, of clay-slate formation, the square-cut flags being piled on one another as regularly as the leaves of a book. The sea has eaten its way, here and there, through deep and narrow channels from one to two hundred feet deep, where the tide toils and roars, and then underneath are long tunnels and chimneys down which one can look and hear the sound of artillery beneath. Up those chimneys, which must be one hundred and fifty or two hundred yards from the shore, one could see the fine powdery surf emerging like thin smoke. The cliffs at the end of the promontory, looking clear out to Labrador, are perpendicular, or rather overhang the sea.

'The marvel of the place, Holburn Head—a monster mass of rock, harder than the material encircling it—has been left alone in its glory, the sea roaring round it on every side. Extraordinary resemblance to the Arch of Constantine, but on a vastly larger scale; and when you see the large, square-cut stones at the foundation and others piled on the top of each other, the illusion is complete.

'This rock has thousands of sea-birds on it, altogether a wonderful sight. The sweep of the bay of Thurso, with the fine old red sandstone cliffs, Dunnet Head, the most northern point of Scotland.

'The Duke of Westminster and I drove on the top of the coach from Thurso, a long, straight, and dreary road, where you could see three or four miles ahead, unlike anything I have ever seen. The fences made of slate flags. After a cold drive reached Barrogill in time for dinner. It is a fine old castle. I preached in Canisbay Church. Earl and Countess, Sir T. Tollemache and daughter, present. I was pressed to stay to meet the Prince and Princess of Wales.'

He returned to Thurso Castle, and preached in the Parish Church. 'Most uncomfortable church, and, though unusually full, looked to me quite empty.' He was present through all the functions which welcomed the royal party, especially at John o' Groat's House. Of the suite he says: 'Poor beggars, they looked cold.' He retired whenever he could to read Spanish with Lady Fanny, and to hold long cracks with Dr. Mitchell—better known by his title of later years, Sir Arthur Mitchell.

The remainder of this year was passed in the usual manner. His autumn Communion, as ever, filled his thoughts. 'The good of Communion very much lost through distractions, and other causes. The Lord help me to live in all things nearer Himself. His favour is the only thing worth having in this world.'

He introduced the son of his old friend, Mrs. Barclay, to his charge of Linlithgow Parish Church, little thinking what would be his next move. His high sense of the calling and vocation of the ministry always made his Charges to pastor and people full of power, and they were couched in terms of great authority, and never failed to bring home to all concerned his own belief that minister and people were entering into one of the most solemn relations which life held for either party.

Preaching, he said, was the highest privilege of the ministry, the appointed means of spreading the Gospel; and unless this was the conviction of both the messenger and

hearers, he believed that there could be no power of the spirit. Certainly his own preaching was rendered all that it was by his own glowing conviction that he had a message to deliver. In writing to a friend, he says:

'One reason why even poor sermons are productive of good is this, that the most miserable handling can never strip the great truths of religion of their native dignity. Sin—the soul, its destiny—redemption—heaven and hell—there is a tremendous grandeur about these subjects which no familiarity and no folly can ever render tame.'

In one of his Induction services, he said:

'My sense of the usefulness, the dignity, and the responsibility of the office of the ministry grows with my growing years. I know no man who has better opportunities of doing good than a humble and faithful minister of the Gospel of Christ. If it be the most honourable ambition that can fire the human breast to live an unselfish life for the good of others, to do something to make the world a little happier and better, to lift up masses of human beings to purer and higher lives, to lighten the burden of labouring and heavy-laden men, to make weary hearts glad, to comfort the sick and the mourning, and to point the eyes of the dying to a better world—then without any disparagement to other professions, I claim for my own the very foremost rank.

'So far as the material rewards of this life are concerned, the ministers of Scotland have not very much to encourage them, and are likely, by and by, to have much less, but they will always have the reward of a noble work to do. Their supreme aim is the moral and spiritual nurture of their people as the citizens of time, and through that their welfare as the citizens of eternity. They have to teach that that eternal life in Christ, which we hope to spend hereafter in the presence of God and His holy angels, is a life which must be begun here, and that we are to be made ripe for heaven only by being faithful to God on earth.'

One of the last letters he wrote this year was to a friend who was neither well nor happy, and the trouble was one he felt he understood, and had had to overcome in this, perhaps the hardest, year of his life:

'*Dec.* 1876.

'I have a quiet minute just before dinner in the endless whirl and turmoil of my life here, and which I cannot spend more pleasantly than just by supposing that you are before me, and that we are resuming some of our long and not uninteresting talks.

'There is a process with which I am but too familiar, indeed it has occupied me for the last two nights till about four in the morning, and to which I know you are no stranger. I call it nagging; nagging, a most pestiferous and unfruitful practice, resulting only in exquisite, internal torment, with no corresponding good. As a victim I can give advice which I try to take to myself.

'You are not to worry over matters which have no right to worry you, but to give yourself rest.

'Christmas is over and New Year coming. May it be a happy New Year to you in every way, and to all your family! For you and for myself I hope it will find us living nearer God, trusting Him more in and for everything, and *rejoicing* more in the sense of His pardoning mercy and sustaining grace in Jesus Christ.'

CHAPTER XI

FROM THE HEBRIDES TO HISPANIA

1877-1879

'"Neath them, on the shining ocean,
Island beyond island lay,
Where the peaks of Jura's bosom
Rose o'er holy Oransay.

'Where the greener fields of Islay,
Pointed to the far Kintyre,
Fruitful lands of after ages
Wasted once with sword and fire.

'Colonsay, Lismore, and Scarba,
Bute and Cumbrae, Mull and Skye,
Arran, Jura, Lew's and Islay,
Shouted then one battle-cry.'

'*January* 1, 1877.—God in His great and much-needed mercy grant it may be the best of all my years!

'After a ministry of twenty-one years, and in good charges, I find that I am as poor as when I began. This is not as it ought to be. But oh! for the heavenly treasure: the other is as nothing.'

The year begins with brief notes of his part in the affairs of the Church. 'Mr. Burn Murdoch here on question of Union of Presbyterian Churches. Finishing paper for Endowment Scheme—Mr. Fleming called on same subject.'

The Duke, in answering his letter for the New Year, speaks of his anxiety concerning the Duchess, and says:

'She enjoys society as much as ever, and is intensely interested in the *Life of Charles Kingsley*; certainly the picture of a very noble character, and representing a type of Christianity more likely than any other I have seen to present it attractively to young men of the present genera-

tion. You should read it. It is very remarkable. With many exaggerations of language, and some twists of thought, his theological letters are full of most interesting matter, and of important aspects of the truth. You will see he was nearly as keen a fisherman as yourself, and I shall never forget the way he rushed at a pool and belaboured it!

'Things look dark in the East. But they must be worse, I fear, before they can be better. I live in hope that even in our own time we shall see an end of the most degraded and degrading government that has ever cursed mankind.'

He never passed through his memorial seasons without suffering many things, and he often used the days to write letters of special remembrance to those who were dear to him:

'SPOUTWELLS, *Jan.* 25, 1877.

'Oh, if you but knew the peace there is in perfect trustfulness in God through Christ! I have been passing through my time of sorrowful remembrance, and I have come here to do it and to be alone on *the* day of all the days of the year to me.

'My sorrow would be more than I could bear but for the hopes which you are casting from you. But I shall never cease to hope that all this will pass away from you, and one of the very happiest days of my life will be that on which I learn that your trust is where mine is.

'Let me put this one question to you. Can you suppose that that power which enables me, not only calmly but thankfully, to think of my beloved—my wife and bairns as dead; that power which enables me from the very bottom of my heart to bless and praise God that they are away, torn from my sight in this world for ever—Can you suppose that power to be a myth, a delusion, a sham? Never! never! "Though He slay me yet will I trust in Him."

'Excuse this hasty scrawl. I am just off to give a long and weary lecture in the City Hall, Perth.'

His advice on public worship was always given with frank openness. He took the congregation into his confidence, and let them feel that the observance of reverent forms was as much their duty as it was the minister's. He never recommended what he called 'frippery,' and his views nearly

always appealed to the people to whom they were spoken, as the following lines testify:

'Manse of St. Mungo,
'*Jan.* 25, 1877.

'. . . We trust that you are none the worse of coming to open our new church. You will be gratified to hear that your advice regarding standing at singing and kneeling at prayer has been taken. Last Sunday when the first psalm was given out the whole congregation rose with one accord, and sang most heartily, standing. Then quite as willingly all knelt down in prayer. It was most beautifully and spontaneously done.'

In February he went to Helensburgh for the services connected with laying the foundation-stone of a new church. He stayed with Mr. and Mrs. Crum Ewing in Ardencaple Castle, which interested him as being the birthplace of the Duke:

'A delightful, turrety, hole-and-corner house. My hosts kind, simple, God-fearing people. Wrote the Duke about the stone-pines. Wrote thirty letters. Gave lecture in Helensburgh, "Rome in some of its ancient and modern aspects." Sat up too late in smoking-room. Dr. Story called after breakfast. Have enjoyed my stay in spite of perpetual rain.'

The Duke received his report on the pines:

'It was very interesting to me, thank you for the plan. I see from it that the one pine I recollect best must have died.

'I have had my say on the Eastern Question, and am relieved. Lord Bath told me, what is plain enough, that many Conservatives sympathise entirely, but they treat the whole question as simply subordinate to keeping faithful to the Government, which is all very well except in matters of Right and Wrong, which this matter is.

'I was sorry to hear of the death of Dr. Smith of North Leith. He is a loss.'

Among the letters of this period is one which brings to light the rapid decline in the use of the Gaelic in the Lowland-Highland parishes:

'LENY, CALLANDER, *April* 26, 1877.

'MY DEAR SIR,—I do not know in whom the power is vested of altering the language in which church services are rendered from a mixture of English and Gaelic to a single one of English solely. I am convinced, however, that Gaelic is of little or no use in this parish now. It has been discontinued for many years except at Communion times, when one Table Service was rendered in Gaelic and a Gaelic sermon was preached. Both of these services at the last Communion in March were dispensed with altogether.

'J. B. HAMILTON.'

His association with the volunteers was one very dear to him, and when the lapse of years enabled him to wear the long service medal, he cherished the symbol of his attachment to Her Majesty's Volunteer Forces:

'INCH HOUSE, LIBERTON,
'*June* 19, 1877.

'MY DEAR SIR,—I am happy to be able to inform you that you have been appointed Honorary Chaplain to the 1st Midlothian Coast Artillery Volunteers.

'The officers of the Regiment are to have a Mess dinner on Friday 29th at seven o'clock, at the Balmoral Hotel, and if you will favour me with your company there I shall be very glad to have an opportunity of introducing you to those officers who may attend. I hope, a little later in the season, I may have the pleasure of entertaining you all *here*, in my own house.

'I very much congratulate myself and the Regiment on our good fortune in having secured your services.—I am, etc.,

'JAMES GARDINER BAIRD.'

At the close of this year he was accorded another honour, the silver medal which marked him as Honorary Chaplain to the Royal Scottish Academy.

In the spring he paid a visit to London. He met Dean Stanley, and this meeting continued to a very understanding friendship between the two ministers.

His occupations and interests were as varied as usual. He visited Princess Louise and the Marquis of Lorne in Kensington Palace. 'Saw over the house—the room where Queen Victoria heard that she was Queen of England.

Went to St. Paul's and heard Lightfoot on Isaiah's vision.' On another day, 'Went by underground to St. Paul's with Lord Walter, went up to the top of the Ball, to the National Gallery and the Royal Academy.' He noted in the former the splendid Turners, in the latter the terrible crush. Lord Lorne took him to the House of Commons, where again he was in 'a crush.' 'The House crowded. Gladstone spoke for two and a half hours.' The Lyceum Theatre, with Irving, and a Wagner concert, were attended, and then he retreated gladly across the Tweed. He was never very happy in 'that loneliest of all deserts, London.'

The Duke, when he saw him in London, had again asked him to join the party in the yacht during the autumn, and the Duchess had playfully reproved him for failing them the previous year. There was no holiday which appealed more to the Doctor, and he promised to join the party at Oban. It was the first of many happy cruises with his friends through those changing seas, for ever washing the mystic isles. He had seen them all before, and was to see them many times again in the present congenial company. The notes from his 'log-book' on this cruise may be taken as representative of them all.

Once he had been a guest, or rather made one of the family party, no cruise was considered complete without him, and he kept life going in the forecastle, in the cabin, by the steering-wheel, and on the bridge.

He loved Nature, and his eyes were quickened in the study of bird-life, the contents of the trawl-net, and in geological survey, and by companionship with the owner of the *Columba*.

'*July* 17.—Left for Oban in pelting rain. The yacht came in at night from Campbeltown. Went on board of her.

'*July* 19.—Beautiful sail. As wind was high put in at Tobermory. Duke pointed out Morven and all the places as we went along. Ladies Victoria, Mary, and Constance on board.

'*July* 20.—Tobermory to Iona. The isle a long, dim line with a hill in centre. The sea and land beyond. The end of the island, the Machar.

'Lay off Iona for letters. Lady Mary, Lady Constance and I went on shore and examined the perfectly white sand at the north end, composed of minute land-shells. A superb day. Sea over the whole bottom green and emerald. A hard sand beach. Flocks of terns, sea-swallows—the most perfectly beautiful bird I have ever seen, body white, black marks on head. Just under such skies did Columba pass his busy day working for God. What a tribute to his worth is passing by my eyes. Multitudes of pilgrims in long black streams pouring back from his shrine.

'There is no more sacred spot in Europe than this lonely isle in the far western seas, where, amid inhospitable surroundings, the Royal Irish exile kindled for the first time the lamp of God's truth in Scotland, whose rays were destined to spread over the length and breadth of Britain, and from it to other and distant lands.

'Let the unselfish spirit of St. Columba and of his great Master rule my life, and it will matter little when I am called away! May we be followers of those who through faith and patience are inheriting the promises!

'Left Iona for Bunessan. Bourghead an enormous Salisbury Crag. Pulled into new pier and walked to town, at the head of a pretty loch. Sleepy place, with shops, where Cockneys come.

'Wonderful foxgloves growing everywhere. One had twenty full-blown flowers and another as many in blossom.

'Fishing after tea, the Duke and the ladies got twenty-seven. Great fun over Lady Mary's dignity pulling in the line, which the Duke imitated. Delightful talks all the way, a continual feast.

'Before the Patronage Act was abolished the Duke had thirty-two parishes almost all Highland, except Rosneath, Row, Campbeltown, and another, Bonhill, which he exchanged for a Highland parish with Campbell of Stonefield. Although he exercised the greatest care many of his appointments did not turn out well.

'Another delightful talk on Prayer and its power even in the healing of the sick. If we begin on the premisses of reason, we go wrong. We must go on premisses of revelation.

'On telling the Duchess I had an appreciation for some Italian verses, she repeated verse after verse of Manzoni's "Ode to Napoleon." A most wonderful memory!

'The Duke believes, as he once said in the House of

Lords, that the Free Churches are the Churches of the future. He won't move a finger to hasten Disestablishment. He believes on the point of constitutional law the Free Church was right, but wrong in the matter of the Headship. He believes Disestablishment would make the Churches one by force of circumstances.

'I said, "Result would be great gain to the Episcopalians in Scotland." He has no objection to bishops *per se*, but has to the dogma which accompanies it.

'The dear Duchess is stronger on Establishment, and hopes she won't see Disestablishment in her day.

'The Duke tells the story of a woman at Bunessan, who, when asked if her house was good, answered, "Oh! yes, if I could but keep out the ocean." I am struck by the perfect simplicity of their lives, and the sympathy between the Duchess and her children. Dr. Macdonald well says of the Duke, "All his actions spring from a conscientiousness based on the conviction that he has to answer to God." Struck with his knowledge of all natural objects. His acquaintance with birds something marvellous. He seems to know every bird that flies and its peculiarities.

'A delightful, quiet Sabbath on board. Service at noon. I in my cassock. We had music. The Duchess's parting at night—"Mo bheannachd leibh."

'I have found that the Gaelic expression for "Confound you!" is "Gun bhuaidh ort!"—"Be without victory!" a survival from ancient martial times.'

The next expedition was one to see 'the long Doctor' in his home at 'Tusculum, by Lake Regillus.' Dr. William Cumming of Kinellan, Edinburgh, was a well-known personality, both in the city and in his house on Loch Baa in Mull. He had been the medical adviser of the Duke when, as a young man, he had taken 'the grand tour' of the Continent, and had ever after been one with his pupil in all his life and interests. The Duke built him a lodge on Loch Baa, where he might have easy access to the ruling passion of his life, fishing. In comfortable 'Tusculum' he kept open house during the autumn. All his friends were welcome if they would be contented with a dinner of 'chopped heather' did they fail to fill their creels with trout.

On the note-paper of the lodge were inscribed the words of Thomas Moore:

> 'Oh! if there be an Elysium on Earth,
> It is this, it is this!'

A sentiment fully shared in by his guests, and Elysium was enhanced by the charms of the host, whose genial, shrewd wisdom and loving nature endeared him to his day and generation.

The diary continues:

'We stalked the old Doctor, and found him in his lair. I repeated Johnson's words on Iona, to his great delight. A mistake was instantly corrected, the Doctor going over them himself. He was pleased to see his old pupil *home*. It was a wild night. The Duchess could not be landed to see Dr. Cumming.'

The weather was so wet, 'Dr. Hamish' found it necessary to record its conduct in verse:

> 'What ails thee, dark spirit of the Western Ocean,
> That the Duke and Duchess thou dar'st to defy?
> Has Mac Cailean not paid thee his wonted devotion,
> That wintry winds howl at the end of July?
>
> 'Just look at Bourghead, with the mists overspread;
> Look at the wet blanket that covers Dunii;
> See how the white horses leap in foam on Eorsa,
> And Gribune frowns stern in a gloomy July.
>
> 'O'er the scud of the ocean, the sea-birds careering;
> Mist-mantles that far down the mighty Bens lie;
> Winds, wild and unstable, to every point veering;
> Are these thy just products, O month of July?
>
> 'The ponderous solan, sailing slow over Salen,
> Looks in at Loch Baa, as he wings his way by,
> And hoarsely croaks out, in tones of bewailing,
> "I'm a goose, I declare, if this is July!"
>
> 'And dear Dr. Cumming sits wearily humming
> Sam Johnson's brave words on illustrious Hi,
> And is thankful that Blackie and Howson are coming
> To help him to live o'er this dreary July.
>
> 'The Doctor maintains that in spite of the rains,
> He never saw sea-trout so terribly shy;
> The one single reason, he declares, is the season,
> Which certainly does not belong to July.
>
> 'O Rain! Rain!! Rain!!! for a moment abstain;
> Have mercy upon us, and let us get dry;
> Remember, remember, it isn't November,
> But fast drawing near to the end of July.

'The earth's axis is shifted; the Pole has got twisted;
A glacial period is fast drawing nigh;
That the Equator's got broken, you've a palpable token
In the glass 55° the 27th July.

'Then blow out your worst, blow out till you burst,
We'll off to Loch Laiche, and there we will lie;
And in the *Columba* we'll lie down and slumber,
And *dream* that the weather is that of July.'

From diary: 'Weighed anchor, meaning to go to Tiree; too boisterous. Sailed for Oban, landing at Staffa. Saw a congregation of puffins. A cold but enjoyable sail. Had a long crack in the evening. Duke read us "In Memoriam." Went to Loch Nell. Trawling, got quantities of flat fish, and the wonders of the deep.'

'Dr. Hamish' was as intensely interested in the contents of the trawl net as in everything else. On this or some other occasion a peculiarly hideous form of marine monster came up from the deep sea depth, and its formation produced great excitement. His exclamations made the Duke fearful lest the crew should consider him too critical of the Creator of such works. Some years later he wrote to him: 'Have you looked at my article in the last *Contemporary*? You will see the devil-fish, which you danced round in such amazement, duly described.'

Lady Constance writes her memories of this and other voyages:

'He was for many years as much part of our annual ship's company as was any member of the crew. The *Columba* was never in commission for many days before she looked into Oban Bay "to pick up the little Doctor." Then began the fun!

'On days given up to dredging in pursuit of science, expressions not always voiced by a Doctor of Divinity were heard, as he surveyed with horror the hideous cavern of a devil-fish's mouth, with all its death-dealing contrivances and appurtenances, or when he pranced about the deck in the clutches of a Norway lobster. "Good gracious! Did you ever see the like of that! *Look* at him, the brute! *I* would never have made a thing like that!"

'Comic moments there were! He kept us always convulsed with laughter, or thrilled as he led us onwards into

the Great Beyond, into a world never spoken of by him as the future or "the next life," because always present to him as the Great Reality in the Present.

'On Sunday mornings, if we lay at anchor in some secluded land-locked bay, far from any place of worship, the crew were mustered aft, and service was held with the Doctor in "full canonicals," standing beside the steering-wheel, raised from the deck by a step, below which stood an improvised lectern furnished with a cushion which he could thump at will during the sermon.

'Some of the finest sermons ever preached in St. Cuthberts were heard again by the little ship's company, the sea-gull's laughter and the curlew's call mingling with Psalm or Paraphrase.

'No one more thoroughly enjoyed "a good dusting" than he did when seas ran high in the Minch or round the dreaded Mull of Cantyre. As the bows of the *Columba* dipped into the trough, or rose like a joyous sea-bird on the oncoming roller, we heard the elated Doctor's voice—"She 's roared through a heavier sea before, and she 'll *roar* through a heavier yet."'

The diary continues:

'Off Lismore, written in sepia from a cuttle-fish taken in the trawl at Loch Nell. Mist too thick to allow us to go to Hinba. In spite of incessant rain this has been a most delightful week to me. The open air, the literary culture, the moving about, the perfect simplicity of the life, the kindly intercourse, and the good health of the Duchess—all have made it a very memorable time. Oban Bay crowded with yachts. Spurgeon on Mr. Duncan's.

'*July* 29.—Preached in Oban to crowded church. Another service on yacht.

'*July* 30.—Duke took me in the yacht to Salen, Mull. Professor Blackie and Dean Howson waiting on the pier. Reluctantly left a pleasant company. Blackie and I walked over the hill, five miles in pelting rain—he talking poetry and philosophy all the while. Got a warm welcome from the Dean and Dr. Cumming. Before pulling off my wet things, got my rod out, and with Neil Macdonald tried two of the pools. A success at last pool, I broke the point, and the rod snapped in middle. No blame to either. Got back and had a first-rate dinner. No need for chopped heather

Dr. William Cumming and his Pupil
By Lord Archibald Campbell

and raisins in the carpet-bag! A wild evening, Blackie poetising, roaring and singing after going to his bedroom. A strange compound, but a good soul. Dean out of sorts and moody from ill-health and insomnia.'

From 'Tusculum' he wrote to one of the Inveraray party:

'Loch Baa, *July* 31, 1877.

'"The perfection of beauty,
The joy of the whole earth."

'On this day year I was with you at Inveraray, amid very sad circumstances, and my mind naturally goes back. What a contrast this year! I left the Duchess yesterday to all appearance in the best of health and spirits. I know your sisters (such sisters!) write you regularly, and keep you well informed regarding the dear object of your common anxiety.

'In spite of perpetual and pelting rain, it has been to me a most enjoyable time; and I tore myself away yesterday with the utmost reluctance.

'It is only when brought close to your parents, as I have recently been, that one realises to the full extent what an incalculable blessing you young people have in having such a father and such a mother, and how great the responsibility which it entails. There I am at the preaching again!

'The dear Doctor Cumming is well, and has just finished his chapter in German. Dean Howson, dull from want of sleep, is writing letters; Professor Blackie is "rampaging" through the house, and yelling songs like a maniac; and the weary rain is pelting on Loch Baa, and inviting me to close this rigmarole, and to take a cast for the Sceptre of Tusculum.'

'My dear Mac Gregor,' wrote Dean Howson, 'your lines on Loch Baa reached me at Inveraray, and were read out at breakfast, to the great amusement of those who were assembled at that meal. It has been a great pleasure and benefit to me to have met you, and I trust we shall soon meet again.'

'Fishing for sea-trout. Got twenty-two, though the weather like winter. Read German with the Doctor, and gave the Dean a lesson in fishing. Drove to the sound of Ulva with

the Dean; had magnificent view of Ben Mohr, and the three triangular masses which stretch up to Loch Baa. Boat to Inchkenneth. Saw the house where Dr. Johnson lived Old church of thirteenth century. Graveyard neglected. Stone with stations of the cross which I should like to get copied. Heavy pull back. Found dear old Doctor waiting dinner. The Dean and I drove over to Salen, where I preached an hour. A poor, comfortless church, but attentive people.

'*Aug.* 8.—Left, Cameron Lees and Blackie waiting me at Salen. Went to Loch Scammadale, a singularly beautiful drive—passed the manse where John Campbell of Row was born. The Duke told me a story of a boatman at the Rosneath ferry, who said to Norman Macleod, "Dr. Campbell is a good man, but he *deviated*."

'Tried the river, fish not taking well. Loch splendid; called on the laird at the end of loch.

'*Aug.* 10.—Home safely. Have been away for nearly four weeks and hardly a day without rain, yet most enjoyable and profitable.

'Loch Baa! a delightful interlude. Dear old Docky, with his beautiful patience, his sermon-reading, and his champagne! Blackie, genial—a grand old man in body and soul. Dean Howson active and learned. Thank God for a pleasant time and a safe return.'

What he called his 'log-book' for this cruise was filled up with a long list of influential Scotsmen, who, he thought, might help to realise the vision of a restored Iona. Had the projected committee ever been formed, it was large enough to break down through its own weight, unless the Doctor with his marvellous driving power had been able to handle the unwieldy team.

During the autumn of 1877 he visited Rosneath and held many consultations with the Rev. Herbert Story, whose heart was as completely set on the project as was that of the Doctor. He enlisted the interest of the late Mr. Richardson, Hartfield, Cove. To him is due the honour of being the first to promise a substantial contribution to this object. The Duke knew of the enthusiastic vision of his friends, but he had not then made any decision as to the

sacred buildings. Thirty years later, largely owing to the influences of this time, the great Trust was handed over to the Church of Scotland.

Lady Mary sent him a copy of Manzoni's ode, which the Duchess had repeated to him. The poetic vein was still with him, and he wrote:

'Dear Lady of the rapid, never-wearying pen,
I own myself thy debtor for Manzoni's song;
Much would it mitigate one grievous ill of men
If all pen-wielders wrote like thee, *who hold'st thine wrong*.'

These bright days of holiday were not to last, and on his return to Edinburgh he found many troubles among his people. Mrs. M'Culloch, the wife of his elder, was dangerously ill, and he says: 'Have come back right into sickness and death. Have had a terrible day, and am too tired to sleep.'

'*Aug.* 20.—Went to lunch with General Stewart; met General Griffith, who led the Greys at Balaclava.'

Later, he speaks of the Freedom of the City given to General Grant of the United States, and a request from the Lord Provost that he should preach a special sermon in St. Giles.

On the same day the Indian mail came in bringing him 'the stunning shock' of hearing that his brother, Dugald, had been drowned in a boat in Bombay harbour.

Dugald, eight years his junior, had been the companion of his earlier life, and the brothers were much attached. He had felt deeply the possibility of their never meeting again, when Dugald had left as ship's surgeon for New Zealand—a voyage which had been full of anxiety and work for the young doctor, as virulent smallpox broke out during the long voyage. He had finally settled in Bombay, 'where his skill and unflagging laboriousness were rewarded by an extensive and ever-increasing practice, and where his gentle character and kindly deeds and ways had made him many fast and valued friends. Those who knew him in that country declare that there were few harder-wrought men in

India. In fourteen consecutive years he discharged without a furlough the duties of a profession which, always arduous, are doubly so under an Indian sun.'

The following appeared in the *Times of India*, August 8, 1877:—'A sad accident occurred yesterday forenoon in Bombay harbour, which has resulted in the death of Dr. Dugald Mac Gregor, who was well-known here to all the Shipping Masters and harbour authorities. Dr. Mac Gregor, having the entire practice of the harbour, kept his own boat, and visited the shipping at regular intervals. At five o'clock yesterday morning he stepped into his jolly boat from the Sassoon's Dock, in his usual health and spirits, and made his round of calls. After visiting many of the vessels in harbour, he returned from the last ship under sail about ten o'clock, intending to land at the Apollo Bunder. When about south of Cross Island, on the starboard tack, the doctor and his men—the doctor steering and his four boatmen looking out—saw a laden prow from the shore, with the wind on her starboard quarter, bearing down upon them. She gradually neared the little boat, and when about twenty yards off, Dr. Mac Gregor as well as the boatmen shouted out to the prow to luff. A high wind was blowing at the time, and it is possible that the steersman of the prow might not have heard the order. Even if he did, however, there was hardly time to luff, and the sea was unusually high. On she came, striking the jolly boat on the starboard quarter, where the deceased was seated handling the tiller ropes. In an instant the boat turned over, and those in her found themselves struggling in the water. Dr. Mac Gregor, it appears, rose very soon to the surface, and was immediately seized under the armpits by two of his men, but life had already left him. When he came up he floated head downwards for a little time before the men grasped him, and they say he appeared then to be dead or quite insensible. A passing jolly boat was hailed and took the whole party on shore, but long before they made the bunder it became evident that the unfortunate Dr. Mac Gregor was past all human aid.'

'*Sept.* 1.—Went to Spoutwells to break the news to my poor old mother—a terrible trial to me as well as to her. She took it very quietly, saying, "The Lord gave, and He has taken away." She told me how she cried

when he went away. Bless God for her perfect trust in her Saviour.

'Mr. Alison preached in the morning in St. Cuthberts, and made allusion to dear Dugald's death. Professor Flint preached for me in St. Giles before General Grant.'

His affectionate heart could not be content without an allusion to his own loss. He wrote while staying with his mother part of a sermon on 'Be ye also ready.' On his return to Edinburgh, a friend acquainted with Bombay gave him a plan of the harbour, and told him of its dangers. 'He bore testimony to Dugald's fine character. He braved many a heavy sea to relieve suffering.'

He paid a quiet visit to his intimate friends, the Lyells, who took him drives to Melrose, Abbotsford, and by the Tweed. On his return to Edinburgh, he says, 'Walked up Arthur's Seat. He died in the discharge of his duty. Which of us comes next? May this bring us all nearer God, and make us ready.' On September 9th he preached the sermon he had been preparing since he knew of his brother's loss. 'Large and attentive congregation. Alluded gently to Dugald,' is his own note. That sermon is still remembered by one who heard it, and who was much later to be closely connected with the minister and St. Cuthberts. 'Very vividly did the preacher picture the scene at Bombay, giving a sense that he himself had stood on the shore and seen with his own eyes the glories of the Eastern light and colour, and the sudden disaster which had deprived the community and the home of a valuable life.' In that lay his power as a 'seer.' What he felt with his inmost heart he saw with his mental vision. In preaching, while raising strong emotion in his hearers, he had a command over his own, which enabled him to give rein to his feelings without fear of losing his self-control.

'I bless God, though I often cry out of the pulpit I never have done so in it,' he used to say in later life. It was true of him, and it showed the high tension with which he preached, and the nervous control which he used in his oratory. It was an unconscious power for, in private,

there were many passages of poetry, sacred and secular, which he could never repeat without painful emotion.

He once told the writer that amongst these was the hymn, 'When I survey the wondrous Cross'—the words were to him the most completely moving, especially when sung to 'Communion,' that had ever been written on the story of the Cross and of Redemption.

During the late autumn he took part in two public functions which interested him deeply. The first was the Induction of the Rev. Dr. Cameron Lees as minister of St. Giles. Some parts of his address to minister and people record his long connection and friendship with one who is known to-day as The Very Rev. Sir James Cameron Lees, D.D., K.V.O., Dean of the Thistle:

'*Oct.* 19, 1877.

'I am happy to think that it has fallen to my lot to preside at your Induction to this important charge. On this day so solemn and eventful to you, neither you nor I can forget a meeting which took place between us on the evening of a July day eighteen years ago, when in the garden of the Abbey manse, which you have just quitted, your late revered colleague, Andrew Wilson, and myself welcomed you on your arrival in the parish in which you have ministered so long, and in which God has so greatly blessed you. It is deeply affecting to me to look across the lights and shadows, the joys and sorrows of those eighteen hard-working years. It is a joy to me to express the trust that the years before you may be as useful and, if God will, as happy as those eighteen years have been.

'I remember well the conversation of that night, the diffidence with which you looked forward to a trying charge, the contrast between the peaceful scenes you had left in a beautiful Highland glen, and the bustle of an exceptionally active, manufacturing town.

'I remember the favourable verdict which was universally passed on you by a critical audience on what are well called Trial Sermons. It was a verdict whose justice has been fully vindicated.

'You entered then upon a position which, for one so young, was very difficult to fill. You succeeded a man of

very remarkable powers. Scotland has had few more eloquent preachers than Patrick Brewster.

'It will ever be to you a happy memory that you began your active, ministerial life as the esteemed colleague of Andrew Wilson, a man of most eminent parts and of the richest promise, than whom you could not have had a wiser or a kinder friend. Of him I may say here what I said when he died, that "for ripe judgment, for masculine power of mind, for thorough manliness of character, for dauntless bravery which refused no sacrifice and feared no foe when truth and right were at stake, he was second to no man I have ever known." The early death of such men as he and his life-long and bosom friend, Dr. William Smith of North Leith, has proved a serious loss to the Church of Scotland. You were fortunate in the place in which you may be said to have begun, as well as carried on, your ministry. There are few towns in the empire that can boast of a more generally diffused intelligence, or of a keener and more stimulating intellectual atmosphere, than the town which you have left, and of which I can speak from personal experience extending over seven years.

'To have ministered there for the long period of eighteen years, with ever-increasing acceptance and success, and to carry with you, as I know you do, the regrets and the respect of its most influential citizens of all denominations, is a sure guarantee that, with the blessing of God, you will creditably fill the important charge to which you have to-day been appointed, and prove a worthy successor of the many eminent men who have gone before you, of whom not the least eminent was your immediate predecessor, Dr. Arnot, a man of high culture and exquisite taste, of simple and beautiful character, whom to know was to love.

'It must qualify the regrets which are natural and unavoidable at leaving that noble Abbey, where you have ministered so long and whose history you have written, to know that you come to a church of still greater memories and more hallowed associations. A man may well be proud of being minister of St. Giles.

'You have left the Church strong and flourishing in the important town which you have left. You will find it strong and flourishing in the Capital to which you have come.

'It must also be gratifying for you to know that you are welcomed to-day, not only with the hearty approval of the

congregation and of the Church generally, but of men of every shade of opinion throughout the Church. It would be difficult to imagine a ministry beginning under more favourable circumstances. Coming to this beautiful city in the fulness of your strength, with a ripe experience and a well-known name, you have every reason to thank God and to take courage.

'In the case of one like you, of whom universal testimony declares that you have done your work well, it would be affectation to tender the advice which would be useful for a younger man, but I may be allowed to say that we expect great things of you, my brother. We expect you to be a power in Edinburgh for good. We expect that your worship here will be a comely worship.

'You have that rather uncommon clerical gift, a talent for business. You will find ample scope for it in our Metropolitan Presbytery. I hope you will not forget that our Presbyteries would be more useful institutions than they are, if there were more work and less talk.

'We expect that you will keep abreast of the thought of the times, know what men are thinking and troubling themselves about, and preach so as to meet their need, and as to the best way of doing that.

'It is reported that an individual said, not long ago, that the religion preached from the pulpits of the Church of Scotland was a modified Socinianism. A more shameful or unfounded untruth has surely seldom been uttered. I do not know of one single minister in the Church of Scotland who does not believe in the true and proper Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. If I knew of one such I should move his immediate expulsion from our ranks.

'For the sake of the Church, much more for the sake of Religion, I am thankful to know that there will come from your lips, in your public teaching from this pulpit, no uncertain sound regarding the faith once delivered to the Saints; and that you believe and will preach what the Church all along has believed and preached regarding the Gospel of the Grace of God.

'Finally, we expect you to be faithful in the discharge of all the duties of your sacred office.

'O, dear brother, on no man's head does there lie a heavier weight of responsibility than on the head of a minister of the Gospel. No man has a sterner account to

give in. No man has more need of the Grace of God. You must feel, as I do, that a sense of the sacredness, of the nobleness, of the usefulness of our office grows on us with the growing years.

'Oh! live near your Master! Keep ever close to the fountain of all grace! Be a man of prayer! Care very little for what the world thinks of you! Care very much for what God thinks of you!

'In the preparation and in the preaching of your sermons, try to keep before you the single aim of glorifying God and of doing good to man.

'What are the applauses of a congregation for that which is eloquent, profound, or novel. What the smiles and compliments of a gratified audience for that which is tasteful and interesting. What the popularity which fills a city or a denomination with its fame compared with saving a single soul from death. How soon will all these ephemeral rewards of public labour wither like a garland in the sun and perish for ever! The very men that now praise our sermons but are not converted by them will, in another world, exchange their applause for censure, and vent their execration upon us that we were not more intent upon their salvation.'

The next event was his appearance for the first time at a political banquet. The occasion was a dinner given to celebrate the return of the Lord Advocate, the Right Hon. W. Watson, to Parliament as representing the Universities of Glasgow and Aberdeen. Dr. Mac Gregor was called upon to answer for 'Church and State.' It was the occasion of his first but not his last appearance in defence of the National Church.

The Liberals were looking to Scotland to return them to power, and they believed the general election was more immediately at hand than it proved to be.

Lord Hartington had either uttered or was about to utter on the subject of the Church of Scotland the only ill-advised and rash utterance he ever made in his political career. The ranks of the Disestablishers were full of fight and the hope of coming victory, and churchmen were beginning to look about with a sense that they must make them ready

for the battle. In his notes at the end of the year Dr. Mac Gregor says, 'Prospects of the New Year are grave. For the Church it opens darkly. Disestablishment is in the air.' In this speech Dr. Mac Gregor describes himself as 'not a great politician.' He was neither a politician nor an ecclesiastic. His was not the temperament of the Parliamentarian nor of a Church ruler. He could cry the slogan and head a charge irresistible in its glowing enthusiasm. 'For God! for the Cause! for the Church! for the Laws!' he could have said at any time in his career.

He was a Tory by tradition, by blood, and by nature. He believed in the connection between Church and State, and the denial of that position he considered was national atheism. It was a deeply religious belief which bound him to the Scottish Church. The very dust of her history was dear to him, and in that spirit he was to fight her battles till her enemies left her in peace. Before his life ended the battle-ground had shifted, and what he had always preached and prayed for, the Union of the Churches, had become the practical question to a country which had changed its centre of interest. In answering for the Church and State, he gave the reasons for the faith that was in him:

'I feel it a very great honour to be called upon to respond to this toast. If the great principle of Conservatism is as I have always understood it to be, though not a great politician —to prove all things and hold fast that which is good; if the great principle of the Conservative party is and has been to preserve all that is noble and excellent in our institutions, and wisely to adapt them to times and circumstances, then I think that this old-fashioned toast is not out of place in a social gathering like this, and that it will ring long in our ears. The connection between Church and State has been and is to a considerable extent one of the great factors of our national life and prosperity. There are a great many gentlemen, some of the most cultured classes of people throughout our country, who would regret the severance of Church and State as a great national calamity. The principle on which the connection is founded I have always thought has been a very simple one, and it is this, that the State is

not a dead, irresponsible machine, but a living, breathing, conscious entity—an existence with a life in the past and a consciousness for the future. If it be a living entity, it is bound to honour and reverence Almighty God; so that it may be very hard to say, but I have felt that the logical result of the principle that asserts that there is no connection between the Church and the State is nothing but national irreligion—some would say national atheism—and it is strange that in America there exists a society, composed of some of the most influential people in that country, whose aim is not to create an alliance between Church and State—the same as in this country—which in the state of matters would be impossible, but to do what is next best, to see that God and the Christian religion should be recognised in the Constitution of the United States. Of the Church of Scotland I need not speak. Of the Church of England also I need not speak; but I may say with regard to the Church of Scotland, although it may be hardly the truth which Macaulay stated, that if a successful attempt had been made to assimilate the Scottish to the English Church, Lanarkshire would have been a sheep-drive and Greenock a shipping village—though that was not true, the Scottish Church has been very singularly suited to the genius of the Scottish people, and has interlaced herself as no other Church has done with the deepest features of the national institutions. The Scottish Kirk and the Scottish School have been main elements in our national prosperity. That prosperity has been an unexampled prosperity. I am old enough and Conservative enough to believe that the Bible, which John Knox opened to us and taught his people to read—our Scottish Kirk and Scottish School—have contributed in no small degree to our national prosperity. It is well to know that a man whose opinion has some weight—Carlyle—has said somewhat like this, talking of our great institutions and our great men: I find at the core of men like Watt and Burns, I find at their hearts' core, John Knox and the Reformation. I may say before sitting down that the Scottish Church, in spite of many difficulties and untoward circumstances, was never more vigorous or more healthy than she is to-day. Within a few years she has added 100 churches to the parishes of Scotland, at a cost of £300,000. Since the Endowment Scheme began 250 churches have been added, at a cost of about £1,000,000

sterling. I believe that though we hear soughs and talk in various quarters that her days are numbered, I am honest enough to say that I think the old Kirk is still dear to a great majority of Scotsmen, not only those who are within, but likewise those who have left, her fold. I hope that the old-fashioned toast, "Church and State," may be long heard at meetings like this.'

'Church extension meeting, Lord Advocate Watson in the chair.' At an earlier one he says in a troubled spirit, 'Heartless want of esprit de corps.'

In the autumn he heard from Dr. Veitch that, owing to increasing age and infirmity, he was desirous of asking the congregation to elect an assistant and successor to his charge.

It was a matter which concerned him deeply, and gave him much anxiety in the closing months of the year. To be unequally yoked to one with whom he had no fellowship of feeling was to him a very living dread. Popular election had not been working for long, and perhaps he had an uncalled for fear of what the people might do in their new-born liberty.

On their side, or on the part of some of them, there was a fear that the ministers might unduly interfere with the freedom of election. The *Scotsman* had an article in the arrogant terms with which in those days it always wrote of Church matters. Dr. Mac Gregor's friends were supposed to be using undue influence for what was known 'as his man,' and various small intrigues were on foot.

The closing weeks of the year he gave to helping in meetings held in the Free Assembly Hall for the support of missions:

'Duty and privilege of prayer for missions. Mr. Whyte on personal consecration. Dr. Andrew Thomson (author of *The Land and the Book*) made a general appeal. Great crowds, many not able to get in. Met Miss Barnard, niece of the late Sir Henry Lawrence, going out to her sister to work in the Zenanas of Poona.

'At a students' social gathering in 22 Queen Street, Dr.

Phin and I spoke on Disestablishment. Enthusiastic meeting. Alison and others loud in laudation of my speech.'

In this somewhat tempestuous atmosphere, it is a relief to find the entry, 'Studying constellations and astronomy.' The year closed with 'an Address to Parents, in New Street Schools, where there are 1100 children. Spoke an hour and a half.'

'The last week of the year was sad. Occupied with the Roll of the Congregation.

'Amid many frailties believe that I am growing in grace, and God is giving me tokens of His favour.

'I trust some one will be appointed to St. Cuthberts who will work harmoniously with me in the delicate relations of a collegiate charge. Am anxious the committee should represent all sections of the congregation. Sir James Gardiner Baird appointed chairman, and to his judicious management the successful termination of the preliminary proceedings was in no small measure due.

'A letter from the committee was sent to Dr. Veitch and myself, asking if we had any preference for any minister, or had any opinion to give. We both declined. My feeling for Mr. Barclay is quite well-known throughout the congregation. All attempts to get candidates to preach, successfully resisted. It was agreed by a majority of committee to elect Mr. Barclay.'

The minority had some views, which were stimulated by the injudicious meddling of the Press, and had the contradiction of sinners succeeded, they ran a very good chance of losing the services of a minister they had no desire to part with.

There was always a choice of parishes at his disposal. A correspondent wrote to him, 'In a letter that I have from Lord Rosebery, who is most desirous of getting an eloquent minister for Cramond, he says, "I must move heaven and earth," to get you appointed.'

To this letter he replied :

'*Feb.* 1878.

'Till I received your letter of yesterday the thought of leaving St. Cuthberts for Cramond never crossed my mind.

At my time of life it would not be my duty in ordinary circumstances to think of such a change, as the field of usefulness here is a very large and important one, and I like my work, though it is harassing at times.

'Things are occurring which may very materially alter my views. It is impossible for me to give you a definite answer till after the election of my future colleague, which will take place the week after next. All I can say in the meantime is that if the congregation elect a minister who is not likely to work harmoniously with me, I shall consider myself free to give your proposal my most serious consideration.'

He was not to be compelled to take any extreme course. On February 26, 1878, he was able to record that all was according to his heart's desire.

'Minority gave in to the majority, and Mr. Barclay alone was recommended to the congregation. Sir James Gardiner Baird proposed him, and Mr. James Balfour Paul, Advocate, seconded his appointment. No counter motion. Carried unanimously by acclamation.'

The Duke had been a sympathetic confidant of all his hopes and fears. He wrote rejoicing to hear of the good omen of success against 'the dour minority,' and asked for a wire when the election was accomplished. Feeling that Dr. Mac Gregor might be somewhat overstrained and suffering unnecessary alarms, he wrote:

'The excitement about the election of Leo XIII. is nothing to the excitement about the election of your future colleague. I hear that a secession is threatened!

'As to my pamphlet on the Church of Scotland, I really think that many Scotsmen are as ignorant as John Bull about the real principles of their Church.'

When the requested telegram was received, the Duke replied: 'Elected by adoration. Three cheers! Barclay I.'

'*February* 27, 1878.

'MY DEAR MRS. BARCLAY,—Do you see how time and Providence bring about their sweet revenge? The old and dear tie formed twenty-two years ago between you and me, and which has survived many a shock, is to be rebound in a

dearer and closer form, and the little boy whose growth I watched is to be my dear and life-long colleague. You know how my mind turned to him from the beginning; and after a time of intense anxiety, he has been elected by a crowded congregation, of whose enthusiasm you can have no idea.

'You have every reason to be thankful to God for such a son as James, and to be justly proud that, solely on the grounds of his own merits, he has at his early age attained to what I may be allowed to call the first charge in the Church.

'My life has been very lonely and very sad; but I regard the event of yesterday as a rich token of the kindness of my Heavenly Father, and having no aim and no object in life but to do His will and work till He takes me home, I am cheered by the thought that I have your son for my companion and friend.—Yours truly,

'JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

Mrs. Barclay answered:

'We are all delighted to think that James is to be associated with you in the ministry. I only hope he may prove what you expect, and be a comfort to you. I feel it is a very important charge for so young a man, and the responsibility very great, and I trust he may not be too much lifted up, but rather may he be humble, remembering that whatever talents he possesses are all the gift of his Heavenly Father, to be used in His service and for His glory.'

From the manse of Linlithgow, 'the stalwart son of his old age,' as Dr. Mac Gregor called his new colleague, came to St. Cuthberts. Many letters were to pass between them, and very fully did Mr. Barclay fulfil his first words on hearing from Dr. Mac Gregor the result of the meeting:

'I sincerely hope and pray that you may never have cause to regret the choice of the congregation. May God help me to be a helpful colleague to you and a faithful pastor of the people.'

Thankfully he resumed all his work with renewed energy, and when the Induction service was held in May he says,

'God grant that this may be the beginning of a useful and happy ministry.'

He always found time to carry on his correspondence with his Campbell pupils. One of them had just emerged from the school-room, and wrote to him on her experiences in the ball-room. If they were somewhat unusual, 'the bloody fight' which was detailed was so entirely after 'Dr. Hamish's' own heart that he saw no necessity to exhort that a more peaceful debut should be made on the social world.

'*April* 1878.

'I was talking to a man the other day, a son of Sir Henry Holland. He had never been in a Presbyterian Church, and could not believe it possible the minister kept on a black gown the whole time, and finally did not believe they knew how to preach. Poor heathen! I told him when next in Edinburgh to go and hear you hold forth, and then I would listen to his remarks. He talked of us as "dissenters," to which I objected, so altogether in the midst of a ball-room we had a long and bloody fight.'

A letter from A. K. H. B. of 1877 may possibly indicate the precise date when both ministers took to wearing what the Doctor in earlier days described as an 'M.B. collar':

'Best of men and most charming of preachers, receive my Archiepiscopal Blessing.

'I tried the collar to-day. It is *perfect*. How could I have lived so long without such? I return the pattern. I will use them for preaching, having just laid in a stock of ties.

'How could you suppose the poem was by Story? Do you not recognise the light touch and airy humour of my esteemed elder, Professor Mitchell? Don't tell anybody.—Ever yours.'

He was always receiving large numbers of letters on the work of his ministry. 'God grant you an abundant blessing on your labours,' wrote an elder of another church. 'The crowded church told me of His favour. Your sermon about the "Feast of Commemoration and Communion" was soul-stirring. My prayers will be at the Throne of Grace for you

on Sunday, the day of the Feast, and for your hundred young people who sit down at the Lord's Table for the first time.'

One who signed herself 'The Wife of a Working Man' asked him, on an approaching visit to Glasgow, to preach in the Cathedral, to deliver the sermon she had heard on 'Man shall not live by bread alone.' 'No one can understand how one in my position has to battle with the cares and annoyances of this life. The way you spoke helps one to attain to the higher life.'

'DEAR DR. MAC GREGOR,—I am a plain artisan, and have been for some time connected with St. Cuthberts. I was in church yesterday and the Sabbath before, and was much moved by many things in your two very remarkable sermons. With shame I confess that your remarks about the speech of my class applied not a little to me. I sometimes seem to myself to be a little better, but I am not just very good.

'Henceforth, dear Doctor, I shall try, God helping me, to be better and purer and braver than I have ever yet been, to be more like that other Brother Working Man you told us about yesterday. I am unmarried, and in my room hangs your portrait with the words underneath it:

> '"Well done, thy words are great and bold,
> At times they seem to me,
> Like Luther's in the days of old,
> Half battles for the free."

I wrote them down myself because they are true. You do not know the spirits you have helped to lift up.'

In sending one letter which had specially touched him to one of his Inveraray friends, he said: 'The enclosed is from a Baptist. It makes my heart full, more especially as the sermon was preached under a sense of its miserable unworthiness. What a happy time I had with you all!'

Another connected with trade in China wrote:

'I have the privilege of sending you a cheque for ten guineas, in response to your touching address on the Chinese, famine-stricken people, whom I am sorry to tell you I for a long time endeavoured to poison. More of this hereafter if ever I have the privilege of meeting or knowing you.'

The Doctor made on this a note of a Chinese proverb: 'The pleasure of doing good is the only one that does not wear out.' 'Good for a heathen!'

Letters from 'the good physicians,' whose advice, he was wont to say, 'was the voice of God speaking through them to the patient,' always pleased him. Very closely had he been in relation with many of them, and in his own home they had again and again brought him the words of hope or of destiny.

The well-known surgeon wrote to him:

'*Aug.* 25, 1878.

'My dear *Friend*,—Let me thank you with my heart for your beautiful and thoughtful sermon of this afternoon.

'I hope many in that great congregation are thanking you too. It is the only explanation of the Mystery of Pain that you put before us so well. In my work one is brought face to face with pain and sin so often and so hopelessly. Some young people never have a chance from childhood. How much your own sorrows have helped you to help others! I hear of you often from sick folks. This does *not* want an answer. It is only a relief to my gratitude.—Your friend,

'Joseph Bell.'

He inducted one of his assistants, the Rev. Mr. Hunter, as minister of Kelso, and as usual his address was full of his thought for the times through which they were passing:

'As far as the ecclesiastical condition of Scotland is concerned, you come among your people in very troublous times. It could hardly be in a more unsatisfactory state. There are none who feel that more than the ministers and members of the Church. There are none who more desire that it should be brought to a more satisfactory end. While admitting to the full the present unhappy position of affairs, a position for which no one Church is responsible; in common with multitudes in the Free Church, and with many in the U. P. Church, what we see clearly is, that the way to heal our troubles is not by Disestablishment and Disendowment. The remedy would be a great deal worse than the disease.

'We can see no possible good that could flow from such a measure to either of the non-conforming Churches. We

can see no possible good that can flow to ourselves. Disguise it how we may, Disestablishment and Disendowment would simply be the destruction of the old National Church of Scotland, the Church of Knox, and Melville, and Henderson, and Chalmers. Reconstruction for generations to come would be a much more difficult thing than it now is; but reconstruct it how you may, it would never again be the Church it was. Its poor endowments, saved from the wreck of the Reformation, and handed down for three hundred years as the religious patrimony of the Scottish people, and pre-eminently of the Scottish poor, would be swept into a gulf where it would be lost sight of for ever.

'The process would be one of extreme violence, and even if it could be accomplished, which I do not believe, it could be accomplished only through that most bitter of all conflicts, which, for the sake of all our churches, I pray God night and day may be averted from this land—a fierce ecclesiastical war.

'I am satisfied that if intelligent laymen from all our Churches were to take this great National question out of the hands of the clergy, they would find out a more satisfactory way whereby the division in the Scottish Church would be healed, and our broken Presbyterianism again be one.'

There were others who wrote to him that the times were evil. Those who think that our day and generation are particularly cursed with the love of money will find that thirty-five years ago it was a matter for anxiety.

From Principal Shairp, St. Andrews, 1878.

'What a dark time this is in our Scotland, if not in all the rest of the world! There can be no doubt that for many years the whole nation has been living too fast, and that with a vast number the thirst for riches has been quite inordinate. What good thing can grow in the soul possessed by that lust? In all sects this passion has been peculiarly intense, and all the teaching of the Churches, instead of counter-mating or abashing it, has not been able even to cover it over with a lacquer of respectability. *But what* (?) Church has been told to smite it as it ought to be smitten? The earnest High Church people in England have done far more to rebuke it. Read Newman's *Parochial Sermons*, and

see how plainly and incisively he speaks about this and other forms of worldliness.'

A letter from Mr. Campbell of Stracathro came to cheer him: 'I have felt anxious to shake hands with you these last two Sundays after service, but I did not like to intrude upon you. I wished to thank you for many faithful, touching, and strengthening words.'

The spring of 1878 was as cold as the autumn of 1877 had been wet. On the 1st of April he speaks of deep snow, and it was not till the 25th that he is able to note the leaves coming out on the lime-trees he had planted in his garden. In May he says that he has been suffering 'from cold and pain in the lung.' He was unable to preach, and was confined to the house when the news was brought him of the death of the Duchess of Argyll. He knew what it meant to all her family, and for himself it was the loss of one whose kindness and friendship he had returned with a warm devotion.

The Duchess wrote to him after the fire at Inveraray Castle in October 1877: 'We have great cause for thankfulness. Lorne has had a bad cold. He behaved in a way it does me good to think of. So did his dear wife.' 'Dr. Hamish' spent four days with her and the family when they had wintered in Rosneath after the fire, and he had left hopeful that the shock of the night alarm, so calmly borne by the Duchess, had left no permanent ill effects. She was never to return to either of her Scottish homes. Her last letter to him was at Christmastide:

'*Dec.* 26, 1877.—May God fill this blessed time and all time with His best blessings to you. I am glad to think Christmas is making happy way in Scotland. We ought to be too grateful to our Reformers to be hard on their mistakes, but it was too unnatural to pass over this anniversary, if our nature makes us keep any, for it to last for ever.'

He wrote to members of the family:

'You have had a sad, sad home-going. I knew nothing of it till my servant shocked me on her return from church

by suddenly telling me the sad news. It has quite upset me, and rendered me unfit for everything except writing my deep sympathy with you all.

'How I wish I could be near you! How I pray God to strengthen you and comfort you all, and make this the means of bringing you nearer Him.

'I fear for the Duke. Be all in all to him. He is bearing a burden of which you, with all your agony, can know nothing.

'God help your dear and noble father, the truest and best of men, in this tremendous blow that has come upon him.

'I have written him from a full heart, doing my best to comfort and strengthen him. The only value of such words is that they come from one who has known what suffering is.'

When the sudden news of the death of the Duchess reached him, it found him in no condition to have his heart filled with yet another anxiety for those he loved.

One member of the family was in Edinburgh, and he hastened out to Kinellan to share in the sorrow which had fallen so heavily also on Dr. Cumming, who lost in the Duchess one he had deeply loved.

He had been commanded to preach at Crathie, and he travelled there the last day of May.

'Looked over my work. My cold still sticking to me. A week of great anxiety owing to the death of the Duchess of Argyll.

'Preached before the Queen, "We glory in tribulation." The Queen very kind. Had a long talk with me about the Argyll family. She gave me two volumes of the *Prince Consort's Life*. The Queen sent to inform me of the attempt on the Emperor of Germany's life.'

From Aberdeen he travelled to Rosneath to take part in the funeral services, and to be as long as possible with the Duke.

Mr. Gladstone was at Rosneath Castle, and Dr. Mac Gregor met him for the first time, and says, 'Had a long talk with him.'

'*June* 5.—Rose after a sleepless night. Story conducted service in the house. On arrival at Kilmun, the Rev. Henry

Bunsen, Story, and I went to the church, and I offered the opening prayer. Bunsen read English service.'

He remained at Rosneath at the Duke's earnest desire, and he could ill have been spared. He set his whole mind on being of comfort to all that circle, and spent himself in being truly the brother born for adversity.

Many years later he wrote to the Duke on one of these anniversary days. The Duke replied:

'Anniversaries hardly tell on me so much as many of the incidents of daily life—such as the society of men whom she liked, and who appreciated her. Even the song of a bird yesterday, which is associated with an evening in the garden here—all these things are sometimes more terrible than anniversaries. I do feel special comfort in the sympathy of those who have gone through the same fire. I am always very grateful for the help you gave me at that terrible time of desolation.'

Before he left he preached in Rosneath Church, and of his friend he says, 'He was able to get through better than I expected.' After a reference to her death, 'affecting multitudes in this land, and also many in America, with the sense of great personal loss, blessed are they who, in whatever rank of life, leave behind them, as she has done, the memory of a useful life and of a stainless name, and that hope which is the crowning consolation for those who mourn them, that for them death is not loss but gain.'

The *Cecile* took him away from Rosneath, and with a pleasant party he had in her a roving cruise through the Hebrides, covering much of the same ground as he had done the previous year in the *Columba*. The weather was fairly good. Mrs. Drummond of Megginch was on board, 'one of the most charming women I ever met,' and all things were delightful.

They went to Lerwick: 'Saw a whaler with ninety tons of oil; ran close to Flugga Lighthouse, the most northerly point of Britain.' Finally they went to Loch Laxford, where 'the *Columba* was waiting for me.' The Duke and his family were at Loch More with the Duke of Westminster.

An eight miles' drive brought the Doctor here, and he spent some happy days hill-climbing with his friends in days of 'spotless beauty.' On the 30th of July, with an obvious groan, he says, 'Determined to return to Edinburgh on Friday.'

Throughout his cruise there were frequent references to the cough which troubled him, and returned with every fresh chill.

The first sermon he preached on his return he notes: 'Dr. Veitch says great was my eloquence! It was the noblest sermon he had ever heard me preach. Words worth preserving from him.'

Other words were written him about his church. In August he says, 'An immense crowd, chiefly strangers. Read letter from "A stranger in a *strange* land."'

The writer described the discourtesy he had received in St. Cuthberts, and if the culprits were present when the Doctor, in the administration of discipline, read the letter aloud to the assembled people, they probably had a feeling they wished they had never been born:

'We were told that we should be put into a seat as soon as you ascended the pulpit, which we accordingly were, but whilst you were giving out the psalm the seat-holder came in and rudely told us to come out, which we were glad to do to escape his wrathful face. Such treatment will make strangers return to their respective countries with a very bad impression of Scottish courtesy, especially in St. Cuthberts Church.'

The letter is annotated 'Read from the pulpit of St. Cuthberts, by J. M. G.'

In September he preached in St. George's Church, and complained, 'Dreadful want of ventilation; suffered accordingly. When will I learn to preach more quietly?'

There were many signs that a severe break-down was at hand. A cursory review of his life makes it only wonderful that it had not come sooner. He had made no long break with his work after all he passed through in 1875. Consciously or unconsciously, he had greatly increased the bulk and scope of all he attempted. In the last two years he

had undertaken platform work in 'Church Defence,' and once he had begun that work he was not allowed to spare himself.

Troubles and bereavements had been plentiful, and he felt those which came to his people or his friends as acutely as if they were his own.

He paid visits to Megginch and Stenton. On returning home he was laid up for six weeks at Dairsie with a sharp attack of pleurisy, and carefully nursed. He acknowledges being brought out of a dangerous illness, and hopes he may do some more work in the future. While confined to the house, he worked hard at Spanish, and from that time he began to write his diary in that language. He could only be in spirit with his church on Communion Sunday. He marks it—'The sixth week of my illness. Thinking much of my people and of Mr. Barclay. One thousand six hundred and twenty-six communicants, and fifty of them for the first time.' A consultation of doctors over his condition made the inevitable decision that he must leave his work and winter abroad, Malaga the place approved of by them.

Improvements had been going on in St. Cuthberts, and he went to inspect them. The pulpit had been altered, the ventilation made somewhat better, and a font, designed by Mr. Brodie the sculptor, and given by him in remembrance of his child, had been placed in it. He was satisfied, and did not leave the church without a short prayer of gratitude in the pulpit. He was full of thanksgiving.

To go abroad always suited his wandering instincts, and he longed for sunshine and rest. 'Have received wonderful kindness from all quarters. Twenty-two people have called to-day. Great kindness, but most hurtful.' To one friend, whose remembrance of him was shown in a way which deeply touched him, he wrote:

'1878.

'My very dear Friend,—This is my first letter. With God's blessing and good nursing, I think I have got round the corner. I am still excessively weak.

'Your letter came to me like a gleam of sunshine to-day, and no words can tell how glad it made my heart. I write to you as frankly as you have done to me. I am not ashamed to say that after twenty-two years in the ministry I have saved nothing, and the thought of the expense of going abroad did cause me a little anxiety, the more especially as the little I have is in the City of Glasgow Bank.

'Still, with a good stipend, I should be able to winter abroad without burdening my friends in any way. But it relieves my mind to know I can apply to you if it is necessary, and nobody be the wiser. Should I ask anything it must be merely as a loan.

'Again and again God bless you!

'Malaga is the very place I have been thinking of. As I am too weak to go alone, Miss Cumming will probably have to go with me.

'I have again had cause to *test* the reality of our holy religion by hard trial, and it has not failed me.

'All through this trouble as now I have been perfectly happy, because perfectly submissive to God's most Holy and blessed Will. It is but a little while and the weary struggle will be over, and we shall be at rest with the Lord.

'Oh! man, if you could but spend the winter with me. What a time it would be!

'*Nov.* 20.—First day of peace and quiet since I returned home. Left Waverley for Greenock. Got on board the *Assyria*, commanded by Captain Campbell.

'Sea like a lake. Cloudless sky. Walking on deck all day. Mr. D. came on board dying. Visited him, and talked of the life eternal. Prayed with three young men. Sea rougher. Went again to see Mr. D., who is evidently near his end. Miserable night.

'At the captain's request, I held a religious service at the funeral of Mr. D. All the sailors gathered—a very touching scene.

'*Nov.* 25.—Feel my health improving every day. Out always.

'Ship has been rolling tremendously. Difficult to keep in one's berth. Up at eight. Sun for the first time. Captain got an observation, and found that we were far to the west. Running all day due west in latitude of Lisbon. At ten sighted Rock of Lisbon.

'*Dec.* 3.—Malaga at 6.30 A.M. Carriage fare 12s. (a swindle).

'Warm as in June. Tormented by mosquitoes. Temp. 60° at 11 P.M. Making progress in Spanish, and can join in the table talk.'

He was soon in communication with his pupils, who were wintering at Cannes.

'MALAGA, *Dec.* 1878.

'MY DEAR LADY MARY,—You did me the kindness to send me your photograph. You must take an invalid's excuse for long delay in thanking you for it. I like it, but not nearly so much as the original.

'How much has come and gone since I bade you all a hurried good-bye on the deck of the *Columba*! A new career opened up to Lord Colin. The Marquess and the Princess across the ocean, ruling and helping on our greatest Dependency. The Duke and my dear friends amid the beauties of Cannes, and poor me back again from death's door to something like life and health. If my short experience is any guide, Malaga is as good a place as I could have selected. The climate is simply perfection. Its charm is its equableness. I have been careful to mark the temperature three times a day, and it varies very little night or day from 60°. Just now, as I am writing, it is 64° at 8 P.M. Your Cannes is nothing like it. If the municipal authorities had any gumption, they would make this city the most favourite winter resort in Europe; and yet, as far as I know, I am about the only English-speaking person who has come to it for purposes of health.

'There is no lack of English and Americans, but they are all engaged in commerce, the trade being mostly in raisins, wine, oranges, etc.

'The fertility of the country is prodigious. I walked to-day with an American gentleman among fields of sugar-cane which his own country can hardly excel, and the grand brown hills which encompass the city, and which look bare and barren to my northern eye, are cultivated to their very summit.

'Yet nowhere—not even in southern Ireland—have I met such filthy hovels and such miserable beggars as I saw to-day!'

Writing to some of his own relations, he says:

'MALAGA, *Dec.* 1878.

'I wish you all from the very bottom of my heart a good New Year. I have been doing very little in the way of letter-writing, preferring to live, according to Dr. Stirton's advice, the life of a vegetable, which suits me admirably in this tropical land.

'We had a desperately rough passage, which in spite of one day's squeamishness I greatly enjoyed. The billows in the Bay of Biscay were well worth a winter's voyage to see. I cannot say that my first impressions of Malaga, as I saw it from the steamer, greatly impressed me. It is a commonplace Spanish town, with a good harbour, which, but for the lazy scoundrels, could be made a very great deal better; a huge, ugly modern cathedral of no particular style of architecture; white and yellow houses; and, to the right, close to the town, an outlying spur of the hills which, bare and brown here close in upon Malaga, and which is crowned with a castle—an old, Moorish, broken-down affair.

'The hills stretch behind the city, and to the left is an extensive plain, excessively rich, and beyond that again magnificent mountains. There! you have a vivid and powerful description of the place!

'Before I say another word I must tell you how much the hills grow upon you. You with your eye for colour would be charmed with them, although not a bush bigger than an apple-tree breaks the monotony. Spain is marvellously rich in minerals, and it shows itself in the colouring of the earth of which the hills are formed; dark and light reds, browns, yellows, and these barren-looking hills are in reality marvels of productiveness, growing the vine, the olive, the fig, the cactus, and the orange up to their very summits.

'We are in by far the best and cheapest hotel (Londres), situated on the sunny side of the one good street of which it can boast, the Alameda; clean, comfortable, with first-rate food and a few mosquitoes, but more than enough to have caused me a great amount of torment, swelling my hands especially, and causing intolerable irritation. I now sleep in some discomfort, but with much peace, having a bag made of a lady's veil into which I insert my head, and long-sleeved gloves for my hands.

'Life here is pleasant. The climate is simply eternal summer, there being no variation, and the nights as warm as the day. About eleven o'clock, when I am going to bed, it is often uncomfortably hot. I get up at eight to coffee and admirable bread. Breakfast at noon, and dine at five. Every alternate day I take a lesson in Spanish, which I am beginning to speak tolerably, my teacher being a Spanish priest of an old Scottish family, and rejoicing in the name Signor Don Federed Messa Gordon.

'The delicious morning hours are given to walking either through the beastly town, which is one huge sink, or out a little way into the country. When I tell you that I like to be out as much as possible, and do a good deal of reading, and have plenty of visits to make and to receive, and am—naturally lazy, you will not wonder I have been so long in writing.

'My health is mending rapidly, bless God, and I hope may soon be what it was. I have my sad times as you well know, and although I write with an apparently light heart it is often heavy enough. All that was specially bright to me in life left me four years ago. I know she would not like me to sit and mope and pass my days in unavailing regrets. Every day I wish to live in the hope of seeing her and our dear bairns by and by, when we shall not part again.

'It is not easy always to feel this, with the thought of all the brightness I have lost for a while; of the house once so full, and now so empty; of the happy faces and forms which one only sees dimly and faintly in the clouds. It is extraordinary how little charm the word "home" has now for me. For me it has no existence. Miss Cumming wondered the other day when I told her that Cumin Place had never once come back to my mind since I left it. My home is not there: and my one consuming desire is so to live that I shall make sure of meeting her and my children in the Home,—"the everlasting home when ages past have gone before, and ages yet to come."

'It is enough for me that God gave me her at all, and that she brightened my heart and home so long, and never once caused me by look or word or thought one moment's pain. A purer spirit never crossed the threshold into the strange and silent land.

'I have had very few letters from home. Malcolm wrote

me once saying that all was going on well. Mr. Barclay is giving the greatest possible satisfaction, as I knew he would: and in respect to my congregation my mind is at rest.

'We have most pleasant people in the hotel, American and English, and there are plenty of French and Spanish with whom I jabber. We have a nice English chaplaincy. The last chaplain came and dined twice with me, and the present—rector of Wallingford in Berkshire, with his daughter—dines with us soon. I took the Communion on Christmas Day, my first opportunity of a special thanksgiving for God's goodness.'

To Mr. Cosens he wrote in January:

'If you happen to remember this day four years, you will not be astonished at my writing to the dear and helpful and never-to-be-forgotten friend of my dark days. It looks to me not four but forty weary years since God took her to Himself. I have tried hard to be brave and patient, waiting for the time when I shall see her again, and my heart shall rejoice.

'Bless God I am very much better, though still far from what I was.

'My wonder is that so few avail themselves of the easy communication by sea from Glasgow to this, which only costs in all nine guineas. I would cross the Bay of Biscay again in a storm just to have a look at it. It was unutterably grand, beautiful, and terrible. The world has nothing to match in colour, form, and sublimity those tremendous rollers, and we saw them to perfection. The sea voyage—and we were nine days in all at sea—did me a world of good.

'Spain seems chiefly interesting from the fact that it is several centuries behind the rest of the world. I am rather inclined to think that the best thing for it would be a good dip in the sea for just ten minutes.'

If the sentiment in the last letter was of the nature of a hasty judgment, he amended it in a judicial spirit in a later epistle to his people:

'The intelligent visitor to a new land, whose conditions are totally different from those of his own, ought to be very slow in forming impressions, and constantly on his guard

against hasty conclusions as to the character of the people He must always make allowance for the possibility of a large residuum of error. Here, for instance, in front of the really handsome station of the one railway which leads to Malaga, is the dirty bed of a small rivulet. There has been considerable rain, and you have carefully to pick your way across the stepping-stones, while mules and bullock-carts are floundering past you. Such a sight is not to be witnessed from end to end of Great Britain. What should we say if in any considerable town we had to cross the street on stepping-stones, with the chances of wet feet before reaching the station? The answer is, that England is not Spain, and that on very few days of the year is there a drop of water in that rivulet. Where, therefore, they ask you, is the use of a bridge? And so, too, you are struck with the vast size of the bed of the Guadal Medina, which flows through the city, and which seems out of all proportion to the tiny stream which is threading its way along. There are days, however, when that river comes roaring down, an impetuous torrent from bank to bank, its waters touching the very roadway of the bridge on which you stand.

'It may be said of the Spanish rivers as of the Spanish people, that their ways are not as our ways. They are hasty, passionate, impetuous, short-lived in their violence, variable in their moods. The river marks the boundary of properties; when it changes its bed, as it often does, the neighbouring proprietor gains or loses. But the law does not permit him to bank it in, lest he should injure his neighbour across the stream; and so the water takes its own wilful way, the result sometimes being that there are deep rivers with no bridges, and great bridges with no rivers. Their rapid rise and turbulent career are largely due to one unhappy cause. This fair land is a treeless land so far as anything like forests are concerned. They say that a Spaniard does not like a tree. What worse could be said of him? and it seems to be only too true.

'The forests which once clothed the magnificent mountains have been destroyed long ago, and there has been no attempt at their restoration. The result is that every heavy rainfall washes the soil away, till in many places the knobby hillsides look like a rising succession of bare bald scalps. There is therefore nothing to retain the rains as they fall. With all their fertilising properties, they are carried off at

once in destructive streams, which, when the rains are over, again become dry. When during the Peninsular War the French were pursuing the flying Spaniards, and came upon these dry channels, they exclaimed, "Spanish rivers run away too." A friend gave me a striking illustration of this peculiarity to which I allude. A Scottish gentleman, largely interested in Spanish mines, took out with him on one occasion a practical engineer. As they passed along in the rain the Scottish engineer pointed out, in great amusement, the folly of the Spanish engineers in building a bridge of such excessive strength over a mere thread of water. They had been away for a week, during which there had been heavy rains. When they came back the bridge was gone. The swollen stream had swept it away, leaving not a vestige behind.'

CHAPTER XII

WANDERINGS IN SPAIN AND RUSSIA

1878-1879

'Yet nightly pitch my moving tent
A day's march nearer Home.'

DR. MAC GREGOR settled himself in Malaga, with the intention of living in a way that was conducive to the restoration of his health, and of making a study of the country and the people where for the time he had made his home. He persevered in acquiring Spanish, determined to make himself quite familiar with the language. 'Taking lessons steadily in Spanish. The English and Americans here seem to like to talk their own tongue instead of trying to acquire this noble language, so I confine myself to talking to the Spaniards at table.'

He arrived the first week of December 1878, and from that day absorbed himself in the life and the scenes around him. He basked in the climate, 'warm as in June,' and the sunlight and genial conditions began to heal the overstrained constitution. He rested, as he always did, in the sunny south. His eager eyes were on every moving object around him; his mind on the language and history of the nation. To see, and to understand with him, always meant recorded impressions. Every detail that interested him, every feature of the landscape, the aspects of nature and of religion, and the characteristics of the nation, were all observed and narrated.

Away from his work and 'my dear people,' he devised a method of communicating with them in a monthly letter written to his colleague, Mr. Barclay, and published in the

supplement of the then new magazine *Life and Work*. He was a born 'reporter,' or, as the Marquis of Lorne called him in their tour through the North-West of Canada, 'our recording angel.' These letters are as full of living detail as was the minister's own existence, and they made his friends see with his eyes the land of his exile, when he was far from them.

'You may stay away another six months if you will continue your letters,' wrote one of his elders. While another, later in the time of his absence, tells him that thousands of the magazine have been sold since the letters appeared in it.

His diary is full of notes of the events at home. 'Heard of the death of Mrs. Tait, the wife of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Went to church at the British Consulate, and saw High Mass in the cathedral. Wrote to Lady Mary Campbell, asking her about the Queen. A Madrid telegram says, "Queen Victoria ill."' Then follows: 'News that Princess Alice has died of diphtheria. Have read in Monday's *Times* how the Princess died on the 14th, the anniversary of her father's death seventeen years ago.' An unnecessarily gloomy prediction occurs at the close of the year: 'Heard Court of Session's decision about Contributory Trustees in the City of Glasgow Bank. Will probably be ruined.'

The conclusion of his first letter to his colleague reviews the story of the year that had passed:

'When these lines reach you the year will be drawing to an end. It is a year which closes in darkness to many, and among them to our Queen. It has been a year full of misery and shame to our dear land. It is awful to think of the wretchedness which has come upon thousands of innocent people from the most colossal swindle of modern times, and which is likely to prove a bottomless pit of black mire to all who have been connected with it; of its vast ramifications, of the paralysis of trade and commerce, of the many strong willing working men who are thrown idle, of the homes where there is no bread to eat. I fear that some of our own people may be in that sad plight. I would fain be back

among you all to speak some words of cheer from the pulpit of St. Cuthberts to those of our people who are wearied and heavy laden from whatever cause, and whom I do not forget, as I know they do not forget me, at a throne of grace. I would urge them to a firmer trust in the fatherly goodness of God in Christ, amid all the clouds of this perplexed and sore troubled time, till "the day break and the shadows flee away."

'It is a great comfort to know that in the feeble health of Dr. Veitch and my own enforced absence, the spiritual interests of the congregation are, my dear brother, in your young but wise and strong hands. Let me close with the prayer that for our dear country, for our people, for you, and all dear to you, 1879 may be indeed a "Good New Year."'

'HOTEL DE LONDRES, MALAGA,
'*January* 25, 1879.

'MY DEAR MR. BARCLAY,—I received and read, with a very great deal of pleasure, the first number of the *Journal of Christian Life and Work*, which I sincerely hope will meet, throughout the Church, with the success which it deserves, and which I heartily commend to the members of our own congregation. It meets a great and pressing want which has long existed in the Church of Scotland. I hope that the high spiritual tone of its first admirable sermon may be the keynote of all its subsequent pages, stimulating our dear people to Christian "Life and Work," and leading them to aim after that "Higher Life" which in this world is the one object really worth striving and suffering for. I trust it will also prove a good vehicle for conveying to the congregation a fuller knowledge of what they themselves are doing, and ought to do, as members of the Church of Christ; for here, as elsewhere, "knowledge is power." Without adequate information there can be no living interest. As you may well believe, it sweetens my exile to hear, as I do, from time to time, from members of the congregation, that everything is going on so favourably.

'You expressed a desire that I should send you another letter for the magazine, which it gives me great pleasure to write. Well, then, let me say something of this city, once a fashionable health resort, but which invalids have for many years ceased to frequent, partly owing to the caprice of fashion, partly to the unhappy knack which Spaniards have

long had of getting up insurrections, and frightening quiet people out of their wits. Let us hope that they have done with this for some time to come; and that having now got an admirable constitution they will set about translating it from paper into practice, and instead of cutting one another's throats try as fast as they can to make up for the three hundred years which they have lost in the march of civilisation. Providence has placed them in what is undoubtedly one of the very richest countries in Europe, with a splendid seaboard to the Atlantic and Mediterranean, good harbours, rich fisheries, a fertile soil, mountains full of precious minerals, and a climate ranging from that of the tropics to one which, in winter, is almost arctic in its cold. With enlightenment and industry, both of which they sadly lack, they could make this country, what they proudly boast it to be, and what it certainly is not, the finest in the world.

'There is time to look, and think, and dream, as the Government officials have not yet come on board to marshal crew and passengers in a row, like a line of soldiers on parade, and to see that there is a clean bill of health. There is not much to delight one at a first glance; a dirty, whitish, grey-looking town at the eastern end of a large plain, its three most imposing and significant buildings right before us: the huge and ungainly cathedral, remarkable for nothing but size and ugliness, emblem—as we shall know better by and by—of Spanish superstition; right in front a large plain square edifice, the Custom House, emblem of over-taxation and jobbery; and beyond it to the right a round building of red brick, the most striking and characteristic in Malaga—the Plaza de Toros—the amphitheatre for the bull-fights, emblem of Spain's lingering savagery and contempt of human life.

'A city of 110,000 inhabitants, with a fair harbour, and which might be a good one; a tolerable amount of shipping, but no quays; the harbour formed by a mole at the eastern side, 700 yards in length, built as far back as 1588, with a lighthouse at the end. If you find anything good in Spain be sure that it is old; this mole forms one of the only two public promenades in Malaga; the other, of which more anon, is the Alameda.

'The redeeming feature, as you look, is the glorious circle of the everlasting hills, bare, brown, and barren to an eye accustomed to the prodigal greenness of the colder

north, but which grow upon one in wondrous beauty as the days and weeks go on. The first ridge of the hills rises from the water's edge, at the extreme right or eastern end of the city, and the first hill-top is crowned by the castle, Gibralfaro (as the rock of Edinburgh is with its castle), scene of fierce fighting when Ferdinand and Isabella drove the Moors from Spain, and national prosperity along with them.

'I said there was time to dream as well as to look. Is the feeling of great sadness, as one looks for the first time on the grey city before you, due to the fact that one has come to it not for pleasure, but for health? What will happen to one ere a few months go by? One of the few English cemeteries in Spain is here. Who knows? but here we are dreaming amid the din and hubbub on board. The steamer is inundated with a wild-looking set of boatmen, who are contending fiercely for our luggage. There is every appearance of a fierce fight about to commence. The gesticulation and din are as bad as at Alexandria. We have put ourselves under the charge of a Spanish gentleman, and are swindled (not by him) but by the boatman, paying 12s. for the circuitous transportation of our luggage over a distance, which, measured by a tape line, would not exceed 300 yards.

'Here we are at last in the Hotel de Londres, where we get comfortable rooms on the second floor. The house is built, as Spanish houses are, for coolness, round a central court which opens to the air. It faces the Alameda, a fine broad street with good carriage-way, and a promenade in the centre, shaded with things that will be trees by and by, with sparkling fountains of clear water at either end. The opposite houses shut out the sea, but there is a fine peep to the east of the harbour and shipping, and bright blue sea beyond. The place is charming. The servants are kind; not so tidy in person, nor so handy with brush or duster, as those at home. The service for a Spanish house is fair; the food abundant; coffee and bread at 9, substantial breakfast at 12, with Valdepeñas wine and an excellent *table d'hôte* at 5, when, in the long intervals between the courses, the ear is impressed with the Babel-like confusion of tongues, and where the great branches of the Aryan speech may be studied with advantage.

'While speaking of hotel life here, it would be unfair to omit mentioning what to me has been its one torment—

Spanish in its name and nature—the little "mosca" or mosquito; the one, and I am glad to say, almost the only, night marauder and disturber of the peace. From some occult cause, it has shown a striking predilection for me, and especially for my hands, which seem to please it best because they pain me most, and which I have been obliged to protect with long gloves, duly peppered every night with "Keating's insect powder." In addition to the mosquito-curtain, carefully examined and adjusted every night, I wore a veil over my head and face, and used to sleep with a half-smothered sensation, till the creatures found that they could bite me through the veil, which I accordingly discarded, more especially as, owing probably to greater natural density in my head, though they raised large welts, these were unaccompanied by the pains of the hands. It takes twenty-four hours for the poison of the mosquito to work, and then for days after, in spite of the constant application of harts-horn, the pain is bad, very bad. The wonder is where, in so small a body, the creature can stow away so large a quantity of poison. Like so many other creatures in this world who have less excuse, its power of producing human pain is in the inverse ratio to its size. I do not know if the natural history of the mosquito has ever been written, and am not sure whether the wound comes from the tongue or from the tail. We say "bite," the Spaniards say "sting." There is nothing offensive about the bright, delicate little creature with its gauzy wings, except its inveterate habit of feeding on forbidden pastures.

'It is as courteous and as cruel as a Spaniard; and, complying with the maxim of Carlyle, it sings while it works.

'Let us take a turn through the streets. They are narrow, tortuous, wretchedly paved and wretchedly dirty. The houses are high and seem substantially built. Even in the poorer houses the windows are almost always balconied, and sometimes seem to touch one another, as in the town of Old Edinburgh. This breaks the monotony of the street, and has a very pretty and pleasing effect. The windows, especially those on the ground-flat, are protected by an iron grating called the "reja." Through these solid bars the love-making is done, the lover being outside on the street—a custom which I should greatly wish to see transferred from Spain to Scotland. There is not a single bit of architecture of the very slightest account. The eye never rests,

as in other Spanish towns, on some exquisite fragment of Moorish work: except in the bronze faces, black dazzling eyes, and sinewy forms of many of the people, the Moors seem to have left no visible trace behind. The castle on the hill is a poor, shabby, tumble-down affair, and the old Alcazar below is the same. The very guns which mount it tell you by their inscription that they were made of bronze from Mexico and Peru as far back as 1780. The piece of red brick covering their touch-hole, and the slouching, slovenly way in which the soldier on guard holds his gun, are both alike tokens of the "insouciance" of the Spaniard, and the want of smartness of his race. One of their own inimitable proverbs says—"Por la calle de despues se va á la casa de nunca,"—By the street of "by and by" you go to the house of "never." The filthy unscavengered streets tell the same tale. The first, the most-abiding, the last impression of the stranger is produced by filth and dirt of every description. It assails you by every avenue that leads to the percipient mind—feet, eyes, and nose coming in for the largest share. The last organ is the sorest sufferer from the vile compounded and uncompounded smells. The city, I believe, is drained, but many of the streets have runnels in the middle, down which flows a rivulet—O vile application of the sweet word!—of black, inky, fœtid material. The common sewers open their great ugly mouths and pour forth their torrents of slime within the reach of human sight and smell. You cannot walk with comfort anywhere, not even along the shores of their beautiful sea. What adds to the constant irritation caused by this unspeakable filth is the knowledge that there are hundreds and hundreds here of idle men who would clean these streets for 10d. a day till they were as bright and pure as the sky that bends above them.

'While on the dark side of things, let me say, that another thing which painfully strikes a stranger is the amount of human misery which the streets present. Here, indeed, are the lame, the halt, the blind, in abundance, exposing their sores, their mutilations, their scars, to the pity of the passers-by. Picturesque beggars—that prolific produce of all Catholic countries—abound at every corner. They urge so constantly their one powerful plea—"Por Dios, señor,"—"For God's sake, your lordship,"—that the word for beggar in the Spanish dictionary is "Pordiosero," the "For-God's-sake-person." The scourge of the humbler classes is

ophthalmia, a bitterly painful disease, ending too often in total blindness. I do not think that I am exaggerating when I say that one in every ten you meet on the street suffers more or less from this dreadful disease. In their rich language they have a special word to the person who guides the blind—"Lazarillo."

'The two principal articles hawked upon the streets seem to be fish and lottery-tickets; the enormous consumption of the former having possibly something to do with their ophthalmia; the enormous consumption of the latter, with their laziness and destitution. In this favoured region, the fertility of the sea is even greater than that of the land.

'JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

In January he speaks of the anxious news he has received from Dr. Phin as to the condition of Dr. Veitch. He heard a poor sermon in the British Consulate, in which the preacher alluded to 'the Holy Mother. Little need in this country, where she is the principal object of worship.'

'Called on the Consul. He told me that when he was Consul at Salonica, Dean Stanley visited it after being at Mount Athos to examine the celebrated MSS.—which he was not allowed to see. The Consul was sent for to be arbitrator in a grave dispute among the monks. He took the Dean with him. The Dean saw the MSS. They were received with much honour, and the Consul got a handsome present.'

The lessons in Spanish went on with renewed vigour in a season which was unduly moist. The diary is alternately punctuated with the words 'dreadful rain' and 'mosquitoes.'

'MY DEAR MR. BARCLAY,—If there is much in Malaga to pain, there is much also to delight. Even dirt can be picturesque. One never walks about in the gleaming sunshine without seeing sights which would drive a painter crazy. The narrow streets are crowded with a population which still bears a large admixture of the Moorish element, well-formed, dark-skinned, with glittering black eyes. Nowhere have I seen more pretty children. The ladies are dressed principally in black, the one characteristic being the graceful lace mantilla, which is their only head-dress, and the equally graceful fan, which none but a Spanish lady can

use well. In the humbler class the dress of the women for Saturday and Sunday is invariably cotton, and their only head-dress the handkerchief, worn exactly as it is to-day by old wives in the Highlands. I note at this moment two passing my window, the one, bright yellow cotton dress, black shawl, crimson handkerchief; the other, purple dress, dark tartan shawl, and bright blue handkerchief. Of the less interesting male sex the one characteristic is the inevitable cigarette, the making and smoking of which seems to be their principal occupation. There is no hurry, no hot haste, in the moving crowd, the guiding principle of life here being never to do to-day what can be done to-morrow. Here and there you will see bundles of rags sound asleep on door-steps.

'As you walk along those dirty streets, every now and then your eye travels through an open doorway into a court within filled with orange-trees, trellised with vines, and rich in masses of golden sunshine. In the better parts of the city you are struck with the contrast between the poor-looking streets and the houses which open upon them, with their marble pillars and staircases, or, better still, with the old Moorish *patio* or open central court, round which runs an open-arched corridor with stately marble columns, a richly-decorated and sparkling fountain in the centre, with banana-trees and oranges, laden with their golden fruit; and even in the very poorest parts of the city, the houses, when you get a peep into them, seem spotlessly clean. In this respect they contrast very favourably with the houses of the same class at home.

'One of the charms of Malaga is its oriental look. Here, in this Western corner of Europe, the unchangeable East is still a living and breathing reality. The look, the colour, the dress, the very speech and songs of the people, retain distinct traces of the long centuries during which the Moors possessed the land. The street cries, ending in something like a prolonged wail, during which the voice descends half an octave, and the peculiar wailing character of the popular songs—one of which I hear on the stairs at this moment—send me back, as in a faintly remembered dream, over eighteen years, to the Arabian desert and to the songs of the Bedouin.

'Above you is the same bright sun, the same cloudless sky. Around you are the same precious things of the everlasting

hills; the palm, the vine, the olive, the fig, the pomegranate, the almond, the orange, the hedges of prickly pear. These fruits of the Eastern are also the produce of the Western shores of the Mediterranean, and the customs of the people are the same. There is the same stately bearing, the same dignified reserve, the same simple kindliness, about a Spanish, which there is about an Arab, peasant. In this land of the sun the life of the people is an out-door life. They cook their food and eat it in the sunshine. I have never yet passed them at their meals when they have not offered to share it with me, saying, "¿Le gusta usted?" "¿Quiere usted?" "Will your honour care to partake?" You rarely pass them on the road, and never speak to them, without hearing the parting words, the most frequent on a Spaniard's lips, "Vaya usted con Dios," "May your honour go with God." Here, on these beautiful shores, the fisherman follows his craft with the same simple appliances and in the same simple, unscientific way as his fathers did when their nets gathered the same dainty little fish for the markets of republican Rome; and doubtless gave utterance to the same fearful and unearthly howls which fell upon my ears yesterday as a haul of more than usual magnitude was nearing the shore. They carry their nets a mile out to sea, the floats used being entire pigskins; and they haul them in from this distance by sheer bodily strength, twenty-six men with ropes round their shoulders dragging the net like beasts of burthen. In the haul which I saw yesterday there were 50 arrobas, or 1250 lbs. of the delicate little fish, the boquerone—the anchovy of England. For miles along the shores on either side of Malaga these patient toilers may be seen at their daily task. This unchangeableness of custom is seen everywhere. The husbandman dresses his vines, and ploughs his field, and carries his produce to market, in the same primitive fashion as their fathers did thousands of years ago. In country districts the wine is still pressed as it was of old in the hills of Palestine. You may see yokes of oxen in the field, directed by the goad, and dragging behind them the primitive oriental plough with which you are familiar in illustrated Bibles.

'Noise is an Eastern luxury in which the animals share, every creature on the road having something that makes a sound. Here, for instance, is a large covered cart drawn by a team of seven mules tandem. The neck of every one of them

is adorned with bells, which make a pleasant tinkling sound as they move along. I do not know whether it be that the ox is supposed to have no ear for music, or whether it be a cruel contrivance nearly as excruciating to the patient, soft-eyed brutes as the prick of the goad, which is simply a sharp nail at the point of a long stick, which they drive into the skin of the sufferer, but certain it is that every bullock-cart which I have passed possesses two cast-metal discs loose upon its axle, the dashing of which together makes a horrid, grating sound, very like that produced by heavy wheels passing over a newly metalled road.

'You notice the almost total absence of the horse as a beast of burthen, its place being supplied by the ox and the ass. The two classes of animals by far the most abundant are the ass, with his blood relation the mule, and the goat; the ass, true type of oriental patience and stoicism; the goat, true type of gravity and decorum—both sure signs of oriental stagnation and immobility. Droves of the latter are found everywhere. I see them every morning passing along the Alameda following the goatherd; he stops at the doors as he passes, and, calling a goat by name, milks the quantity that may be required. And, by the way, such a thing as cow's milk is almost unknown. The butter is supplied chiefly from Holland. This is a land without grass. Washington Irving speaks of the "greensward"; but, so far as Andalusia is concerned, that is a poetical fiction. For months I have searched for a little bit of greensward the size of a carpet, but I have searched in vain. Nothing more strikes a foreigner, or one of our own people, after a long exile from home, than the greenness of our own dear land.

'Along the two principal roads which lead to the city the asses any morning may be counted by hundreds and hundreds, some of them laden with boxes of raisins, others with panniers formed of Esparto grass and filled with every conceivable article — lime, crockery, vegetables of every description, manure, bricks, fish, barrels of water, and skins of wine.

'One learns to love the long-eared, patient creatures as they trot past him day by day, all muzzled, following one another in Indian file, the leader wearing a loud-sounding bell. They are admirably adapted to the requirements of a hilly country like Spain, where roads are rare, and even the

great highways are little better than rough bridle paths. Both the goat and the ass have the invaluable capacity of living and thriving where other creatures would starve. I had the curiosity one day to ask a bright-looking young goatherd if his flock could eat the coarse barbed leaf of the prickly pear. "Look here, your grace," he replied, and cutting off a large slice with his knife, and calling several of his flock by such pretty names as "Señorita," "Lucera," "Mona," he gave me ocular evidence of their capacity for prickly pear. A friend of mine the other day saw a goat quietly eating a newspaper, and, being probably of an inquiring turn of mind, it seemed to enjoy it; at least it finished it. Most oriental is the picture, not only of the ass with his bright head-dress, but of his bronzed and ragged owner, of the varied attitudes which he assumes upon its back, of the speech with which he addresses it, and of the cruel whacks with which he urges it along. There is a great need here for a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. I have seen a piece cut out of the neck of an ox, just where the yoke pressed upon it, as clean and red as if done by a surgeon's knife. When I pointed it out to the driver he merely shrugged his shoulders. Donkeys and mules are still addressed in the language of the land from which they came. Their "wo!" is our "wo," which I suppose we got from them. Their "gee-up" is "arr-r-ree," rolling the "r's" and prolonging the "e." I have heard the same, I think, in the desert. An unsophisticated Cockney, who could not manage his "h's," was led to the important discovery that, whereas in England the donkeys are all called "Neddy," here they are all called "'Arry."

'Here is another thoroughly Eastern scene: a tree-shaded knoll; a bullock trudging round it, driving a rough wooden wheel; coarse earthen vessels fastened at a little distance from one another, forming an endless rope. You hear the pleasant creak of the rude machinery, and the still more pleasant splash of the water. It is the water-wheel of the East, just like one I saw close by the obelisk of Heliopolis in Egypt, near which, tradition says, and perhaps truly, the Virgin Mother rested with her Child.

'Here again is a sparkling fountain, round which is gathered a motley but picturesque group of mules and donkeys with their drivers, waiting their turn; tall young girls in gaily coloured dresses, their laughing faces and

sparkling eyes glancing bright as the sun which lights them. So have I seen from the tent-door the girls of Nazareth grouped round the fountain, filling their water-jars, and gracefully carrying them homeward on their heads.

'For several days we have had the dry north wind known as the "Terral," very pleasant to be out in, but not without an element of danger. Possibly to it I owe the fact that for the last few days I have not been so well as I should like to be. There has been nothing to cause grave anxiety, but quite enough to cause uneasiness.

'The results of a very short service in a room two Sundays ago convinced me how utterly unfit I am as yet for public speaking. I am sorry to write this, but it is better to speak the truth. Honestly using all possible means for restoration to health and work in the noblest of all services to which a life can be devoted, I am able to leave the result calmly and confidently with God.

'I need not say how grieved I am to hear of the serious illness of our beloved colleague and head, dear Dr. Veitch. Dr. Phin keeps me informed of his condition. It is one of the sorrows of my exile that I cannot minister to him who so kindly ministered to me when my dear ones passed from me into the valley of the shadow of death.

'The good God whom he has served so faithfully and so long be with him. I can wish for you and me, my dear colleague, no better wish than that we may be as pure-hearted and as faithful ministers of the Gospel as he has been. I commend him and you, and the congregation entrusted to your care, to the rich mercies of God in Christ, assured that they are not forgetting their sick or their absent minister at a throne of Grace.'

'On the 24th February we moved on to Jerez, or Xeres, de la Frontera, a distance of twenty-eight miles (the J sounds like Kh). For most of the time the train is occupied in winding round the irregular bay over a dead level, passing first through the lagoons of San Fernando. A large tract of country, which can easily be flooded with sea-water by means of a system of canals, has been turned into farms for the production of salt. The crop seemed to be enormous. For miles the ground was covered with vast mounds of it, hundreds in number, formed like the top of a steep-roofed house, and with no covering whatever. Ford compares them to the tents of our soldiers, who were once

encamped on that plain, and the comparison is not an inapt one. There seems salt enough for the consumption of the whole human family. As we pass the station of Puerta Real, we see what, in this land of the sun, we hardly ever expected to see, a field of something like grass and real cows feeding on it. We rub our eyes to make sure that this is no illusion. How delicious that little bit of verdure after the never-ending yellows and browns of Malaga! The train turns inland from the sea, following the banks of a broad, full-volumed river, along a land that seems washed for miles by the high tides. There are thousands of rich-looking acres ready for the plough, which a little labour, one would think, could easily reclaim. The country gets greener still. Great herds of cattle are seen roaming over the plain. The line begins to rise a little; the soil grows white; the famous vineyards appear; and then Jerez shows itself, in a vast rolling sea of green. There is a land, we say, at last, something like our own. It is pleasant on arriving in a foreign town to come unexpectedly on something home-like. On landing at Jerez the first object that attracted my attention was a large building fronting the station, and bearing on it the familiar name of Mackenzie. Happily I knew the owner of that honest name, and to him I owe a most pleasant week. I was charmed with Jerez. For its scrupulously clean and healthy appearance, for its beautiful plazas, for the manifest care which its authorities have taken to make it bright and cheerful, I know of no city of the same size and population (51,000) in Scotland or in England that can for a moment compare with it. In praising it as highly as I condemn Malaga, I am only acting fairly by both. It has many fine, and two magnificent, churches. The towers of all of them are covered with storks' nests, their long-legged builders and owners either standing solemnly beside them or wheeling around. There is an unrivalled water-supply, brought pure and limpid from the living springs at Tempul, thirty miles away, the source whence the Romans—those mighty builders—supplied the Cadiz of their times.

'Some of the houses of its wine-growers are palaces of wealth and beauty, and yet Jerez is not a fashionable but a strictly industrial town, the centre of the world's sherry trade, covered from end to end with those great "Bodegas" or cellars, where the precious wine is stored and matured.

These are one-storied buildings of great size, with gently sloping roofs supported by rows of pillars, with windows high up in the side walls, and circular windows at the end, the whole bearing a striking resemblance to an old-fashioned church. These Bodegas are warm in winter and cool in summer.

'A vineyard requires perpetual labour and most patient and tender care, the cultivation costing per acre as much, I have heard, as £10 a year. The vines are pruned about six inches above the ground, when one or two long shoots are left. The first digging commences immediately after pruning. It was an everyday sight in the town to see men waiting to be hired, and as one walked into the country to see as many sometimes as fifty busy in the vineyard dragging with their peculiar pronged implements the earth away from the vines to let in the light and air, leaving each stock standing in a little square hole a foot and a half deep, which gathers and retains whatever rain may fall and whatever finely pulverised soil the water washes down. It was a living illustration of our Lord's parable. The second digging takes place in February, when the rains are mostly over; the earth is then gathered about the stock and heaped well up around it; then about the end of April the ground is carefully cleared of weeds and hoed over. Lastly, in June, when the leaf is in full beauty, the ground is again gone over with the "asado" and smoothed down to keep out the draught. How richly does the generous plant repay this loving toil! Year after year for more than half a century will these dead-looking stems, in that thin chalky soil, with no sustenance or help but such as the rock and the rain and the sunshine give them, send forth without stint or fail their flower and fruit; and when the strong suns of summer have burned up every living thing, and all nature is thirsting for the rain, they present, fresh and beautiful, their mantle of living green, the broad leaves keeping the earth beneath them cool, and protecting the grapes from the fierce heat which would burn them into dust.

'Like Malaga, Jerez has the inestimable benefit of an English Consular chaplaincy. Its present chaplain, Mr. Croker—the *beau idéal* of a Christian minister—laid me, by his kindness, under a debt of gratitude. Like Malaga, Jerez, too, has a Spanish Protestant Mission; the latter Presbyterian, the former Episcopalian. What a pity such names

should ever be connected with missions anywhere, especially in Roman Catholic countries! I attended the English service on the Sunday morning, and the Spanish service in the afternoon. M. Viliesed, the minister, who is described by the Catholics as the "priest who has a wife and a beard," is well spoken of by the English residents as a resolute and hard-working man.

'The mission has a pretty church of its own in the Mundo Nuevo, and the service was very much the same as in the churches at home. As the forenoon service is the principal one, this may account for the attendance being rather small. But it was greater than in an advertised service which I attended in the Catholic church of San Augustin. There were forty-five girls and fifty-six boys present, some of them evidently not very much taken up with the sermon. As I looked at these pretty children, every little girl with a cotton kerchief over the head, and the black eyes blazing below, and saw the deep-lined faces of the old women, with whom life had not seemed to deal very kindly, and as I listened to the blended voices of the old and the young singing their Spanish hymns to old familiar Scottish tunes, in the peculiar wailing tones which I have heard in the Highlands, I am not ashamed to confess that there was a trace of moisture on my eyelids, and that my heart was far away from Jerez and from Spain. One verse of one of these hymns, sung to the tune which I can only describe as the one to "Greenland's Icy Mountains," greatly touched me as I thought how little the bonny bairns who were so heartily singing it knew its meaning as yet, and how happy it would be for them if they knew it by and by. Perhaps some of the children who may read this would like to see with their own eyes what their little bronze-faced, black-eyed brothers and sisters are singing in Spain. Here are the words, addressed to Christ:

'"Sin tu influencia santa
La vida es un morir;
Gozar de tu presencia,
Esto solo es vivir."

"Without Thy holy influence, life is but a death; to enjoy Thy presence, that only is to live." Yes, that is true.'

He soon left this sphere of interest, and entered Seville, there again to be filled with concentrated admiration of the

solemn majesty of the Cathedral, and he became engrossed in all the shows and pageants of Holy Week in Catholic Spain. He went to everything; saw how the Church kept the solemn season, and the people enjoyed the savage cruelty of the bull-fight. His notes were as full as his comments were outspoken. He startled the grave and stately Spaniards by his salutations, inquiries, and frank criticisms. He was not afraid to tell them in their own language what he thought of their ways, their laziness, shown even in the pronunciation of their own beautiful language, and the corruption and inefficiency of the Government. He had nothing but admiration for the country, and only one opinion as to the cause of the nation's shortcomings.

From a letter:

'Nowhere in Seville, nor in any Spanish city I have seen, not even in dirty Malaga, nor in the very poorest quarters thereof, will you find such dreary, dismal, frowsy dens as you will see, without searching, in all our considerable towns and cities, and not least in Edinburgh. Misery there certainly is, as great as I have seen anywhere. I have never heard from our streets the fateful cry publicly uttered by the lips of hungry thousands for cheaper bread. I have never seen what I have seen in Spain, struggling masses of people gathered round bakers' doors where the Government was selling a cheaper loaf. The whole political system is rotten from end to end and through and through to the very core. This I have heard here from all classes, and especially from the lips of working men. Spain is bad enough and dark enough. It is pitiful to find so much poverty in a land which God has made one of the most fertile in the world, and which, as a priest said to me the other day, in the hands of the English would run rivers of gold. But there is another side to the picture. What never meets the eye in Spain are the frightful pictures of *moral* squalor with which our cities abound. You must travel fast and far to find another Cowgate or Saltmarket, and such faces and forms as you will find there, telling the story of early and life-long vice. In this respect I must state my conviction that the Spaniards have the best of it. Here, no doubt, nature is far kindlier, and the conditions of life are more easy than in our colder and sterner land, and the

sufferings of the poor are lighter to bear. There are no streets with wine-shops at every other door. There is not the craving for stimulants, and therefore there is not the supply. Nature has made them a sober people. There are no dreary closes and alleys which the sunshine never enters, no vast piles of buildings where social sin and misery are huddled together so as to generate as much poison as possible. Even in the poorest parts of their cities you look into clean and pleasant courtyards, trellised with vines, and filled with the odour of flowers and the happy voices of singing-birds, and the merry laughter of bright-looking, happy, half-naked children playing in the sunshine. I do not give *them* the credit, which is due to the air they breathe, when I say that in some respects they are a cleaner-living and a happier people than we are ourselves.'

'SEVILLE, *March* 29, 1879.

'MY DEAR MR. LORIMER,—The kindness which led you to write to me will also lead you to put my long delay in answering on the right place, an invalid's laziness and the tempting luxury of procrastination.

'I thought it very good and mindful of you and of your wife to send your absent minister your kind Christmas and New Year wishes in the midst of your own rejoicing, in which I mingled, hoping by and by to make the acquaintance of the little stranger who so cheered you both by his coming. It was a cause indeed of unbounded thankfulness that all was well. As a father, I know the anxiety you must both have borne. May the young life be spared to be a blessing to you, and may you be spared to be a blessing to him.

'The results of Mr. Gladstone's candidature we shall learn in time. Meantime it bodes no good. The City Bank is a black business to all connected with it. I have spent so much pity on others that I have had none to spare for myself. It has never cost me a thought. I fancy it may not affect me personally. Should it do so, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." I have great faith in Ballantine's Gospel, "Confide ye aye in Providence," etc. "Owing," as the saying is, "to circumstances over which I had no control," my stay in Seville has now extended to nearly a month, a much longer period than I anticipated. The change from the tropical atmosphere of Malaga to this more temperate region of Andalusia has been most grateful

in many ways, and my general health has undoubtedly improved. For that and other reasons I shall stay here over Holy Week, the attractions of which now, I understand, superior to those of Rome, draw crowds of visitors from all parts of the world. We are to have as next door neighbours the Duke of Connaught and his young wife.

'From Seville I shall move on to Cordova, thence to Granada.

'I need not say to you with how much heartfelt thankfulness I received the intelligence that you are to be ordained to the honourable office of the Eldership in connection with St. Cuthberts, nor how hopefully I look forward to a long, pleasant, and useful intercourse with you in the new intimate relation in which we are to be placed. It is an immense comfort for me to know that under Mr. Barclay all is going well.'

'DEAR MR. BARCLAY,—Seville contains within it what it were well worth going there to see had Spain nothing else to show. It is the first spot to which the foot of the traveller turns as he enters it. One visit at least it must have every day of his sojourn. As he leaves the city it is the last spot on which his eye lovingly lingers, and from which he tears himself away, saying, "I shall never see thy like again." It is the cathedral, the glory of Seville, of Spain, of Christendom; the noblest building ever reared by human hands. I, who have seen the best, say that St. Peter's is larger, but it lacks the impressiveness and grace, and even the majesty of Seville. Had it been in any other land than Spain, it would have held the place which St. Peter's now holds as the foremost church of Christendom. As a Gothic cathedral it stands alone and unapproachable.

'No power but religion could have reared such an edifice When we think of the buildings which *we* have raised for God, let us be silent. However we may estimate them, the minds which conceived and the mind which executed a work like this had nothing mean or small about them. Though the latest of the great cathedrals, its architect is unknown. He wrought for the glory of God, and not for human fame. There is no record of the cost. It must have been enormous. The paving alone cost, at the end of last century, £30,000.

'Robbed and rifled as it has been, the great church of

which we speak is still a treasure-house of wealth and of art. Each of its twenty-seven chapels has its painting or other object of art, some of them of priceless value. Naturally it is rich in Murillos. During the French occupation Marshal Soult, who had an eye for a fine picture when he could get it for nothing, eased it of some of its choicest treasures. There were two special gems by Murillo, which the Chapter hid out of the way. Some one was good enough to tell Soult what had been done. "He sent to beg them as a present, hinting that if refused he would take them by force. The Marshal one day, showing Colonel G. his gallery at Paris, stopped opposite a Murillo and said, 'I very much value that picture, as it saved the lives of two estimable persons.' An aide-de-camp whispered, 'He threatened to have both shot on the spot unless they *gave up* the picture.'" That picture was probably the "Repose in Egypt," which I saw this last summer in the great collection at St. Petersburg. Another Murillo, one of the finest pictures in the cathedral, has a curious story connected with it. It is the "San Antonio" in the chapel of that name. A year or two ago a clever Yankee fell in love with it, and not having Soult's winning ways, he managed to bribe some priest or porter, who gave him the key of the chapel, with the result that the principal figure of the picture was found next morning cut out. It was subsequently found in America, bought by the Chapter, and neatly restored to the original canvas.

'There are two great drawbacks to the glory of Seville, as of every Spanish cathedral I have seen, the one without, the other within. Unlike our fair English cathedrals—and they never look more beautiful than when visited straight after the greater edifices of the Continent—they are not surrounded by great open spaces, and soft, delicious greensward, and mighty trees, and all the dreamy delights of an English cathedral close. The taste for natural beauty has yet, like much more, to be developed in a Spaniard. They who know him say that he does not like a tree, and what worse could they say of him? He can build but he cannot make a garden or a park. His cathedrals have no breathing room. They are squeezed round as in a tight jacket; often, as in beautiful Burgos, by mean and paltry buildings.

'Worse still, there is not, I suppose, a single cathedral in Spain whose interior is not sadly marred by the choir and

the altar, the parts of the building devoted to the service, and on which, as being the holy of holies, the wealth and the genius of the builders have been most lavishly bestowed. This is simply a magnificent temple within a temple, and occupies fully a half of the central nave, being cut off from the rest of the church by high walls of the most delicate and costly stonework. It is in two parts, the high chapel, great altar, and presbytery being to the east of the transept, and the choir or "corro," contrary to all our ideas of the choir of a cathedral, being always to the west of the transept, in the nave proper. The high altar and choir are thus divided from each other by the width of the transept, from which and from one another they are screened off by lofty screen-work of iron gilt, called "rejas," and always a marvel of delicate, beautiful, and costly workmanship. A passage railed off by low iron rails leads from the choir to the altar, which thus may be said to form one structure, and that the working part of the cathedral. The north wall of the altar space is called the side of the gospel, and the south wall the side of the evangel, and at the end of these walls are two pulpits so placed that the reader of the gospel or evangel, or the preacher for the day, can address the people, whose face is turned to the altar, so as not to have his own back turned to that object of adoration. You can quite understand how an inner church like this breaks the sweep of the majestic nave and aisles; and, rich and beautiful though it is, you would gladly see it swept away.

'Its builders, however, did not see it in this light. They built for the service of God, and the great services are conducted here—the high mass which is the sum and substance, the centre and crown of Roman Catholic worship, and which we believe, with reason, to be one of the grossest delusions which ever afflicted humanity. They built, as they believed, for the bodily presence of God, for what they call S.D.M., "Su Divina Majestad," His Divine Majesty, present in a bit of bread. This is the root idea of these magnificent cathedrals. They were reared upon and around a superstition. However much we may regret the cause, we cannot but admire the results, and the self-devotion, the self-sacrifice, the labour, the earnestness, by which these results were obtained. They believe that God has condescended to dwell among men in the host upon His altar, and we have seen the sort of tabernacle they have reared for His dwelling-

place. We believe that the dwelling-place He loves best is a human heart: have we been at equal pains to make these hearts of ours a home worthy of Him? Which of us has best shown His sincerity?

'As I saw those meek and kindly-looking, but snuffy canons, clad in their imperial purple, shuffling along to the daily service in that majestic choir, the thought would arise, "Was it really men like these who reared this mighty pile?" Yes, just men like these—men to whom the Church is wife, and father and mother, and country and home—and who, while lavishing freely untold wealth and genius on their work, were themselves content to live on little better than pauper fare. Spain may well be proud of her cathedrals, but there are much better things which she sorely lacks. The principal of these are education and a reformed religion.

'JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

An injury to his knee, which he strained while walking in the amphitheatre at Italica, laid him up at Seville for a month:

'I had the misfortune to add another to the long and unrecorded list of wounds and bruises received in that arena. While poking about the entrance to the subterranean gallery, and examining the holes in the walls into which the beams were inserted, whose withdrawal permitted the lions to bound into the arena, I lamed myself so badly that I had great difficulty in getting back to the carriage, and thence to the hotel. It has kept me a close prisoner to my room. Weeping and grumbling won't mend a leg or any broken thing in this world, and so I am as cheerful and contented as could be reasonably expected in the circumstances. These are not particularly favourable. My room has two windows and a northern aspect, and is two long stories up. There is a sitting-room behind it, opening upon the patio, a central court, but it is so dark and dismal that I am never wheeled to it.

'The prospect of Spain is not a lightsome nor extensive one, consisting chiefly of the whitewashed wall and the brown tile roof of the house on the opposite side of the street just six yards away; the line which bounds my horizon, and divides earth from heaven, being, according to my best calculation, about ten yards from my window. Here I enjoy a much more extensive view over the roofs of

Seville, and realise how much things in this world improve by contrast. No two housetops are exactly the same. Here is one close by, which forms a washing-green—wash-house, clothes-poles, ropes, all complete—with a pretty shrub growing to complete the illusion that instead of being well up in the air we are really on *terra firma*. Here they do their washing on Sunday. It is probably not the worst thing they do on that day. There is a great variety, too, of square white towers. There is a plentiful crop, also, on the roofs, of a plant like turnips in flower. All this, with the roof of a church close by, and a little peep of the olive ridge beyond the river, and a bit of the beautiful blue sky ever reminding me that heaven is as near me here in Seville as in Edinburgh, makes a not uninteresting outlook to one who has been compelled for a time to be an Attic philosopher.

'There is a feast for the ear as well as the eye; for beyond is another roof which serves as a hen-house, where cocks, against all rule, take to crowing about eleven o'clock at night, and are at once answered by all the cocks in the neighbourhood. This helps to make the night as lively as the day. If the cocks are silent, the mosquitoes, more attentive to their duty, seldom are. The worst possible ear, once familiar with their song, never forgets it. And even should they lay aside their instruments of torture, and go to sleep for a little, there are other voices of the night to keep up the general liveliness.

'The old institution of night watchmen calling the hours, and comforting such citizens as happened to be awake by the assurance that it was "half-past three and a frosty morning," has, I suppose, almost died out in Scotland. Twenty years ago I knew what it was to be tortured by it. In changeless Spain the custom lingers on. In Malaga there are no words, but a wild, weird whistle, which breaks the silence of the still night hours. Here in Seville it is not a whistle but a yell, which—right under your window, so close and piercing that it seems to come from your room—with no note of warning, suddenly breaks the silence and chills you like a nightmare. The words were the same in Jerez as in Seville, and are the same, I suppose, everywhere else; and were, no doubt, heard in the streets of our own cities more than three hundred years ago. The watchman at Jerez was happily gifted with a melodious voice and a good ear, and the song he sang was something like this:

'"¡ Ave Maria purissima ! La una y sereno."
"Hail, Mary the purest ! one o'clock and a fine morning."

'It will complete this cheerful picture to add that the food is the worst and the most indigestible which even Spain could provide, and Spain has a special gift in that way. Even the wine is detestable. Day by day the dinner returns pretty much as it came, and the hands are getting visibly thinner. Still, what with that wonderful air which it is a luxury to breathe, with a visit now and then from a kind Scottish friend, and from the amiable English clergyman, with plenty of Spanish literature, and with two of the best resources I know for the time of sickness—the Bible and trust in a guiding Hand—the days have passed pleasantly away, and I cannot recall one weary or unhappy hour.

'JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

Laid aside from his outdoor life he writes of his study of Spanish, and remembers how he first determined to master the language:

'Years ago, in a time of great personal sorrow, I began the study of Spanish as a mental distraction. I can recall the cold winter day in which in a carriage which bore me to a quiet country church I sought mental *relief* in the intricacies of the Spanish verb.

'From time to time since then, in the rare leisure moments of a Scottish minister's life, it has been a pleasure to spell through a page of a Spanish book, or to feel that I was making some little progress in the mastery of what is undoubtedly, in spite of its meagre literature, the most forcible and robust of the Latin tongues.

'During my illness began to read the New Testament with the Spanish grammar.

'*April* 5.—Have begun sketching. Gone back to the French grammar. Time has passed very rapidly. How easily we accustom ourselves to anything.

'*April* 8.—Yesterday was Palm Sunday. To-day I have driven round the town. How charming to be out of my long imprisonment. The beautiful green fig-trees and many others. Walked on crutches to the square.

'*Good Friday.*—Feeling very sad. My colleague, Dr. Veitch, died yesterday. In the cathedral from nine to twelve. Saw the rending of the veil. The proceedings

occupied about three hours, and were very wearisome. There was a great crowd, all dressed in black. Being unable to stand so long, I managed to get a seat on one of the steps of the choir. The people who were standing behind, especially one old woman, seemed inclined to use their feet rather freely against the ribs of the heretics. There was a short and poor sermon on the evils of heresy, which probably stimulated the feet aforesaid to a practical application. In front of the high altar there hung an enormous curtain some forty or fifty feet in height. All of a sudden this curtain parted in twain with a rending noise. There was, at the same time, a poor imitation of thunder and lightning, produced by letting off a large quantity of crackers up among the galleries. As the line of fire ran rumbling along away up among those glorious pillars, and nobody was visible, it looked a case of spontaneous combustion, and would have pleased little children had any such been there. It was a poor affair altogether, ending in a little smoke.

'There can be no doubt that, in the magnificent shows and processions of Holy Week, Seville stands first.

'As few of those who read these words will ever have an opportunity of witnessing spectacles which seem possessed of sufficient attraction to draw multitudes of their intelligent fellow-creatures from all parts of Europe, they may not be unworthy of some attempt at description. To many it may seem shocking to connect them with holy names and holy things. But the facts are there. Why not look at them and speak of them as they are?

'During the first three weeks of April 1879 Seville presented a rich variety of attraction. The first week was the most popular: it was occupied with the religious processions and masquerades. In the second week was the great fair and the bull-fights. The third week was that of the races.

'The general idea of the solemnisation of Holy Week is an extended series of circus-like processions, in honour of the sufferings of the Saviour, moving slowly along from the various parish churches to the sound of solemn music, and all tending towards one point, the cathedral, returning thence in the same order to the place from which they came. It is a sort of annual and public airing given to the images, of which the Spanish churches are full, all life-size, many of them works of very high art, and draped in vestments sometimes of fabulous value. These images are grouped

artistically together to represent some scene connected with the Passion of our Lord. They are fixed on huge, gilded cars, the most common form of which is an enormous, old-fashioned, four-poster bed, and are borne along on the shoulders of men, carefully concealed by drapery, nothing being seen of them but the feet, and nothing heard but the sighs and groans. These groups of images are called *Pasos*; the cars or platforms that bear them are called *Andas*; and the societies which have charge of them, and which form the processions, are called *Cofradías*, confraternities, *Hermandades*, brotherhoods or guilds. These guilds have some resemblance to our masonic brotherhoods, each being under the charge of a chief brother, *Hermano Mayor*, and have at least the same skill in public display. Each parish has its own *pasos* and *cofradías*; they arrange, I suppose, among themselves what special scenes and incidents each is to put upon the stage, the days and hours in which the procession is to take place, and the line of streets along which it is to move. The procession began on Sunday, when, in the cathedral, at half-past six in the morning, there took place the ceremony of blessing the palm branches, which are then distributed among the people, and carefully kept as a charm for the rest of the year. Hence the day is called *Domingo de Ramos*, Sunday of Branches, or Palm Sunday. They were continued on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, the last being the great day. It may give you some idea of what a gala time they make it, when I tell you that no less than thirty-seven of these *pasos* or scenic representations were borne in procession through the streets, and that I have before me an ordinance of the Señor Alcalde, or Lord Mayor, closing all shops and establishments, of whatever kind, except those for food and medicine, from ten o'clock on Thursday morning till the ringing of the *Gloria* on Saturday; all carriages and horses being debarred from the streets during the same time, and throughout the whole week from all streets in which processions were taking place.

'I waited for nearly two hours before there was any appearance of the first procession. By and by a faint sound of slow, solemn, muffled music floats past on the wind. There is a rustle of expectancy in the crowd. Presently a cross-bearer flanked by two young priests makes his way along the noisy lane, and bowing to the Alcalde announces

the approach of the *paso*. The procession appears headed by a posse of policemen. Then follow, two and two abreast, two long, slowly moving strings of the most comical beings imaginable. They are dressed in white cotton dresses with a long train which they carry over their arm, and wear a broad yellow waistband with the tassels hanging down. They all wear white gloves, white stockings, and buckled shoes. Their face is masked; for over their head and neck is the funniest of head-dresses. It has exactly the shape of a sugar-loaf, or rather of a very large and tall extinguisher prolonged into a tippet behind, bearing an embroidered cross, and falling down over the face into a bib embroidered with letters. There are two slits for the eyes. The dress is called a *tunica* and the head-piece *capirote*. The wearers of this dress are called Nazarenes, and they form the main phalanx of the procession, which numbers several hundred people. These dresses, always of the same general shape, vary in colour according to the different confraternities to which they belong. Each Nazarene carries a large wax candle, lighted, and nearly as tall as himself. They carry these candles like truncheons at an angle to the body, the wicks pointing to one another, partly for the sake of effect and partly to save their clothes from the shower of melted wax which is constantly dripping down. The consumption of these candles in the course of the week must be enormous. But they recoup themselves by selling what remains of them at high prices to credulous persons, as the holy service which they have rendered imparts to them the important quality of "averting lightning and of being very beneficial on death-beds for securing salvation." After the Nazarenes came a man bearing a large cross, with a priest on either side, and after him another bearing a banner of black velvet inscribed with the S.P.Q.R. of the Romans and surmounted by a golden eagle. As the cross moved past, the vast assemblage uncovered the head. Then came, slowly marching two and two, a great number of respectable citizens in full dress; after them, a troup of horsemen, grand-looking Roman knights, with helmet, breastplate, shield, and spear—all, except the flesh-coloured stockings, made, I suppose, of good pasteboard, and as fresh-looking as if they had just walked out of Madame Tussaud's. Little children, almost infants, dressed in martial attire, gave great amusement as they passed along. It vexed me to see them;

they looked, poor little things, so wearied and sick of the whole affair. Then, preceded by a priest in full canonicals waving a censer with incense, came the principal object of attraction, the centre-piece of this splendid cavalcade. I confess to a cold "grue" when, high over the heads of the crowd, so high that it reached the windows of the second story, there came into view the intensely human-like face and form of the Saviour suspended on the cross, moving along as if by some invisible power, and the great gilded car made its appearance, borne on the shoulders of some thirty men concealed by drapery, with nothing visible but the feet. It was guarded by soldiers with their arms reversed, and followed by soldiers and policemen with their heads uncovered, and by a regimental band playing mournful music. The figures on the car had an unpleasant, shaky, tremulous motion as they drew nearer, which added to the general ghastliness of the effect. The bearers paused right before me, so that I had leisure to look. The car was without question splendidly adorned. No pains had been spared to make it as rich-looking as love *and* labour could make it. There were great quantities of flowers and ornaments. There were six magnificent candelabra, with six burning candles in each, protected by glass shades. Those seven full-sized figures were not only real works of art, but were most artistically grouped. In the centre was the Saviour stretched on the cross, His head crowned with thorns; to the left Longinus, the Roman soldier, on horseback, in the act of piercing His side with the spear, the feather in his helmet waving in the wind. Taught, as we have been, to regard with an awful reverence and sanctity these sufferings which accomplished the world's redemption, we cannot but think with a shudder of their being thus paraded as a public show.

'The Fiesta over, the Feria begins. The solemnities of Holy Week are followed by the bull-fights, the horse-races, and the fun of the Fair. I question if anywhere in Europe, with the exception of Nijni Novgorod, there is such another sight as the Fair at Seville. It is a great national institution, where all classes of society mix freely for a few days, and enjoy themselves heartily and innocently. As we drove along past the white, quaint, old-fashioned houses; past the palatial-looking Tobacco Factory, the courtyards round which were overgrown with what looked very like our

Scotch thistle; beneath the delicious green of the acacias, which were just putting forth their delicate white blossoms, we found ourselves in a rushing stream of people on foot, on horseback, and in carriages of every description, making for the Quemadero, the great park outside the city, famous as the spot where they burned the heretics. This broad plain was covered from end to end with tents of the most ragged and picturesque kind, booths, horses, donkeys, sheep, goats, black pigs, and poultry, and such a collection of curiously costumed and bronze-faced men and women as I never saw before. It seemed as if all the scraggiest donkeys in this land of donkeys had come to change masters. And such horses! and such bands of genuine gipsies! On either side of the leading thoroughfares there were many hundreds of small, brightly painted, wooden houses, open in front to the weather, carpeted and comfortably furnished, like a private dwelling, with tables, chairs, mirrors, etc. These are annually erected, and let out for the Fair to private families, and the best and highest in the land have a tent or house of the kind. It is a merry, gay, bright, open-air life for a few days, and must be greatly enjoyed by the young. Up and down the roads, on splendid Arab steeds, ride ladies in the gay, Andalusian dress and the genuine, sashed, and bandit-looking Caballeros of Spain. And then the trafficking and chaffering going on! Hawkers, of every description, vending their wares; men mounted on carts, and, in that richest and most sonorous of European tongues, recommending medicines warranted to cure every mortal ill. There are whole squares, and lanes, and streets of tents for merchandise, for toys, for sweetmeats, for amusements of every description. The inevitable American is there with his circus; and there is a rich assortment of merry-go-rounds, keek-shows, and jugglers. When the Fair is lighted up at night, and the entire population have given themselves to that most serious of all work in Spain, the work of dancing, the scene, they tell me, is quite a fairy one. In my own excursions among the booths I did not see a solitary drunkard.

'In my next letter I shall take you to see that abomination of abominations—a Spanish bull-fight.'

'In a few seconds a trumpet sounds. There is a dead hush over the vast assemblage, followed by a tremendous

cheer, as a powerful black bull, with short, strong horns, bounds into sight, and rushes right on till he has reached the middle of the arena. For a second the magnificent brute seems stupefied by the sudden glare of the light, by the mass of human faces around him, and by the deafening roar from thousands of throats. But the pause is only for a moment. There is again a dead hush. Glaring fiercely round, he sees, right in front of where I am sitting, a Picador on horseback, close to the palisade. I noticed, as the fray went on, that the Picadors liked to have their horses close to the palisade, or wooden wall, as it helped them to bear the terrific shock of the onset, and when they fell, they fell on the top of this wall, over which they were dragged by their comrades. With head well down the bull makes straight for the horse. The interest is intense. I am conscious that a thrill of nervous excitement runs through the vast crowd. There is death in the rush of the powerful brute. I have come to see, but it needs an effort to keep my eyes open. I see the Picador tightening himself in his seat. I see his long lance firmly grasped under his right arm. Strong, calm, and brave, with his body slightly bent in the direction of that thundering charge, he looks like a knight of old waiting the deadly onslaught. I see the lance piercing the shoulder of the brute. I can see it quiver, as did the lances of the knights. I see the bull's horns plunged into the side of the horse, which is lifted almost off the ground. There is a confused crash against the palisade, over which the Picador is being lifted by the attendants. With hardly a quiver the horse rolls back stone dead. There are yells around me of "Bravo, Toro! Viva, Toro!" The smart, business-like performance of the bull has merited the approbation of the critics of the noble art! and certainly there is no time lost. He turns round, maddened with rage and bleeding copiously from the deep lance-wound in the shoulder, and takes to goring the dead horse. The Chulos draw him off with their mantles. In a moment he sees another Picador on horseback, standing right out in the arena, and he makes straight for him. There is the same breathless interest. The poor blinded horse has no idea of what is coming, and stands stock still. In a moment the powerful horns are into him, and horse and man are literally tossed into the air. You can fancy you hear the whack with which the head of the Picador strikes the ground. The man struggles to

extricate himself from beneath his fallen horse. The attendant Chulos are all around him, trying to lift him. The bull returns again to the charge, and tosses the horse. You tremble for the prostrate man. The red mantle is thrown before the bull's eyes, and he is enticed away. The horse is raised up to his feet, and I see three gaping wounds in his left shoulder, from which the blood is streaming down. The Picador has been nearly killed. The trumpet sounds, and the first act of the bloody drama has come to an end.

'And here the *Banderilleros* begin their part of the performance. Since he bounded into the arena the bull has scarcely had a moment's respite, and the excitement and exertion are beginning to tell on him. He has been baited and badgered in every possible way, flying after those mantles which the Chulos hold before him; and it is distressing to see how the poor brute pants and foams. His heart is beating, his sides heaving at a terrible rate. The full fresh vigour with which the bull makes for its enemies the moment it appears on the battle-ground contrasts greatly with its lessened vigour after the process of incessant torment has gone on for a little time. It is the gameness of the creature under these distressing conditions which the "Fancy" very naturally applaud. The Banderillero appears before him, holding in each hand a dart about the length of a walking-stick gaily adorned with ribbons. He stands at a little distance, right in front of the bull, leaping up and down, waving the darts, and inviting the bull to charge. For a moment the two stand facing one another, and it is impossible not to admire the courage and the coolness of the man. At last the bull makes at him. The man plants himself firmly, bends slightly forwards, and just when he seems to be within the horns, he steps nimbly aside, and the bull rushes on with these two darts neatly planted on either side, a little behind the shoulder, and dangling down, ribbons and all, from the creature's quivering flesh. The thing has been cleverly done, and the performer is rewarded by shouts of applause. This game goes on for some time, till two or even three sets of these barbed darts are sticking in the sides of the bull, and causing him exquisite pain. To vary the luxury to themselves by increasing the torture of the animal, they sometimes have charges of detonating powder at the points of those darts, which, exploding within the creature's body, lacerate it frightfully. With these delightful ornaments

hanging and fluttering at his sides, the bull flies round the arena, seeking a new enemy, whom he never fails to find in the nimble Chulo. If anything can be called beautiful in such a scene, it is the marvellous play of these agile fellows, who throw themselves right in front of their enemy, and then, gracefully unrolling their elegant silk cloaks and holding them spread out in their two hands, seem literally to fly across the arena, with the bull tearing at their heels, and, almost as if the horns were helping them, lightly vault across the palisade. It is the unquestionable danger which gives its piquancy to this ticklish work.

'The second trumpet is blown, and the third and last act begins. All that has preceded has been but preliminary to the last and greatest scene of all. It has served to excite the spectators to the proper pitch, and to take a sufficient amount of strength out of the bull to enable him to be disposed of by the *Matador*. This illustrious gentleman, who has reached the very top of his profession, and whose name, as the hero of a hundred fights, is more widely known in Spain than the name of the Prime Minister, now steps gracefully upon the scene. No popular candidate for parliamentary honours ever received a prouder ovation from a discerning public. The cheers are tremendous. The gallant fellow is gorgeously dressed. He throws his cap on the floor, and shows his hair neatly tied up into a knot behind. He has a naked sword, of truest Toledon steel, in the one hand, and in the other the *Muleta*, a short stick, and a little silk mantle of a deep red colour, and not much bigger than a large pocket-handkerchief. He walks up in front of the President, the *Autoridad*, and formally requests permission to despatch the bull.

'And now comes the chief part of the play. This dexterous gentleman and the poor, panting, bewildered, but still powerful brute stand face to face, and there is certain death in store for one or the other. Mere brute strength and trained human skill are pitted against each other, and the chances against the former are a hundred to one. Now is the great moment for the "Fancy" men of the ring—*Los Aficionados*—and for the trained eyes which can see niceties and delicate artistic touches in the play, which utterly escape a northern barbarian, who comes from a land where, instead of cock and bull-fights, there are societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals. Every movement of the man, and

every movement of the brute, are keenly scrutinised. You can feel as well as see that the excitement is intense. The Matador is studying the character and the tactics of his foe. He plays with him for a while, gracefully waving the red flag before his eyes, and quietly stepping aside as the bull charges. He is waiting his opportunity. At last he thinks he has it. Every breath in that vast assembly is drawn, every sound is hushed, as, with his feet firmly set, his body slightly inclined forward, and the sword held straight before him at arm's length, conscious that ten thousand pairs of eyes are glaring on him, he meets the thundering rush. But he has missed. His aim has not been true. The sword has just grazed and glanced aside. He tries again, and misses again. And now the plaudits of the crowd are changed into yells of fierce derision. I never witnessed anything like it. The spectators are insulted by such culpable awkwardness. I note the words which I hear yelled around me—those at least which will bear printing: *Embustero*, "liar and impostor"; *sin verguenza*, "shameless"; *al toro*, "give him to the bull"; *á la carcel*, "to the prison"; *mátele*, "kill him." The bull, on the other hand, has quite his share of malediction, for it is his fault, as much as the Matador's, that he has not run straight enough to allow himself to be neatly killed to please his lords the people. I hear the words *mucho toro*, *malo toro*, *una escopeta*, "a gun" (to shoot him). Had he been a proper bull, he would have come right on. Serious reflections are, therefore, cast not only upon him, but on his ancestry, and the howl is general. Thanks to his iron nerves, the poor Matador seems to take it all coolly enough, and plays with the bull again, who now seems too exhausted to charge. The two are again facing each other. The mob are shouting *Ahora*, *ahora!* "Now, now!" when the swordsman wipes out the disgrace of his two previous failures by adopting the boldest and most dangerous method of despatch known to his art, styled the *Volapié*. Half running, half flying, almost with a single spring, he rushes at the bull, and plunges his sword behind the horns, between the left shoulder and the blade, with such force and accuracy of thrust that it penetrates half-way up to the hilt. Deafening shouts of applause; masses of the spectators, men and women, rising to their feet, waving their handerchiefs, and yelling *Esa verdad*, "That 's right." The poor dying animal, with the hilt of the sword and part of the blade sticking out

of his back, and shaking as he walks, foaming at the mouth, and covered with a lather of perspiration, totters feebly round the arena till he gets close to the carcass of the horse which he killed at the first onset, and there, sinking down on his knees, he passes out of pain. The sword is drawn reeking out of the wound and wiped. There is a sound of trumpets, and a brass band strikes up. Six gaily-caparisoned mules prance into the arena; three of them are yoked to the carcass of the horse, and three to that of the bull, and drag them off at a gallop, to the immense delight of the spectators, who always greatly relish this sight.

'Spain has the distinction of owning one of the finest territories in Europe, and, with the single exception of the "unspeakable Turk," of being in many respects the most backward of all European nations. It has another high distinction. It is the only country in the civilised world which can show a genuine bull-fight. This is one of its national institutions. It can be said of it, as it can be said of little else in that land, that it is in a flourishing condition. During a recent year, 2375 bulls and 3561 horses were killed in this pastime. Though in one sense a survival of the Roman amphitheatre, the bull-ring, or, as it is called, the bull-feast, has peculiarities which mark it as a distinctly native growth and genuine product of the Spanish soil. I do not forget the difficulty which a person of one nation has in understanding the customs and amusements of another and quite different nation, and yet I am going to say hard words about it as an essentially brutal and cowardly amusement, a pastime possible only among a people who have yet to learn the first elements of civilisation, and which is as certain to vanish in the course of years as that to-morrow's sun will rise. It is gratifying to state that I can say nothing worse about it than I have heard from the lips of Spanish gentlemen themselves. These, however, are as yet few and far between. I have noticed more than once that a distant and delicate hint as to the impropriety of these spectacles is sure to set a public table in an uproar. It is like holding up a red rag before one of their own bulls. They have an uneasy suspicion that the world outside Spain not only condemns them, but laughs at them, which is a great deal worse.

'The most important individual in the interesting performance is, of course, the bull. He is the hero of the fight,

the chief actor in the play, and, I also think, the noblest. As there will not be much time to notice him, when in raging fury he tears into the arena, you had better look at him now. From the days of Hercules—and these are even farther back than time immemorial—Spain has been celebrated for its bulls. Its special herds at Utrera, and elsewhere, for supplying the Plaza, are as famous as our best herds of shorthorns. He roams over the great unenclosed plains, and is selected for his boldness, strength, and ferocity, and specially trained for the arena, where he appears between his second and third year, bulls of greater age being too powerful for the purpose. He is a beautiful, thick-necked, well-formed creature, with short, strong horns, very low set on his fore legs, rather smaller and more active than, but otherwise not very unlike, our own shorthorns. He has not the shaggy appearance of a good Highland bull, and, to an untrained eye, does not look half so ferocious. When he appears before the public to take his part in the play, his neck is gaily adorned with ribbons and trinkets, called *moña*. It shows the estimation in which he is held as an important member of Spanish society, that these *moñas* are often the gifts of ladies of high rank, princesses, duchesses, etc., whose names are duly advertised in the morning papers. The driving in of these powerful creatures to the Plaza is an exciting and even dangerous operation, which never fails to attract an immense crowd of those who are too poor to pay for the more exquisite pleasure of the fight. Once he reaches his destination he is doomed—doomed to torture and death, though he be the bravest bull in Spain. He has no chance for his life. The same may be said of the only other irrational brute in the whole performance, the horse. Poor, old, worn-out, and worthless, with hardly more strength than enables them to trot across the arena, and to carry their riders, one of their eyes carefully bandaged that they may not see their danger, nor shrink from their charge, they appear there for the express purpose of being brutally gored to death, of showing how long they can move about, how much blood they can pump out through those ghastly wounds, in the sight of that blood-loving race, before they fall dead. One of the abiding impressions of the cruel spectacle is its utter want of anything like fair play. It is not sport, it is butchery. The Plaza is not an amphitheatre, it is a shambles. A lion and a man, or a bull and a man

in fair fight, as in a Roman amphitheatre, with a chance for their life, that is one thing; but a horse—noble brute, even in its decay—blinded so that it cannot escape, kept standing for the purpose of being gored to gratify a brutal mob, is another and a very different thing. It shocks one of the strongest and noblest sentiments in a British heart, the love of fair play to the humblest creature of God, and is a spectacle which could be found only among a nation of cowards.

'The first part of the disgusting performance comes to an end, and I am given to understand that it has been a miserably poor one, and a disgrace to bull-fighting Spain. The words in my note-book are these—Brutal, brutal! devilish, devilish!'

After these scenes, witnessed with such varied emotions, he passed on to Granada. At Seville, and during his journey, he met Lord Archibald Campbell, who was travelling through Spain. They were to meet again, after he had been some time in his rooms in the Alhambra.

'Among the persons whose acquaintance I had the pleasure of making at Seville, not the least important was a certain Señor Carmona, a working silversmith of Granada, who had come to the great Fair to sell his tempting wares. This person was introduced to me by an English lady under the rather unusual character of a perfectly honest Spaniard. The good lady's opinion had been based upon the infallible ground of a six months' experience as a lodger in his house. After such a test of honesty I need hardly say that my briefer experience of three weeks more than confirmed my friend's judgment. Her recommendation led not only to a considerable purchase of the silversmith's wares, but to an arrangement whereby the lodgings which she had vacated were to be occupied by myself. With both parts of that transaction I had every reason to be perfectly satisfied. There was a charm beforehand in the very thought that these lodgings were actually within the Alhambra walls, and that for several weeks I was to live and move in that enchanted ground. All the world knows that if Granada is the diadem of Spain, the brightest jewel in that diadem is the Alhambra. It was another good result of the above transaction that, being still unable to move without diffi-

culty, I secured the services of Señor Carmona as my *valet de place*, to help me out and into the carriages, and to see to my safe transference from the one city to the other.

'It was one o'clock in the morning before we reached our destination, and were warmly welcomed by La Señora Carmona to rooms plain and humble, but comfortable and spotlessly clean, and where, for the first time since I came to Spain, I was sung to sleep not by the mosquito, but by the nightingale.

'When I awoke in the morning, the sun was already blazing in the heavens, but as the window of my room was a very small one with very little glass—not bigger nor better than the window in an Irish cabin—the room was delightfully cool. Through this little window my eyes, trained to love and delight in trees since they were first opened to the light, and wearied with the monotonous treelessness of the land I had been living in, now looked through the delicious greenery as of a forest. Nightingales were singing in its shady recesses. There was a perfume of flowers in the air. There was the song of running water, all the sweeter because so long unfamiliar. And through the trees and over the trees, with nothing human visible between me and them, I got my first clear glimpse of the snows of the Sierra Nevada, a ponderous mass of whiteness in the intense and glowing sunshine. There was the massive and mighty Alp, filling the whole of my horizon, and swelling far up into heaven. Through my little window I could see nothing of it but its everlasting snow. I reckon that as one of the *white* moments of my life.

'Carmona's house formed almost the last in a little lane of very humble two-storied dwellings, which, in the unsettled times of Spain—when have they ever been settled since Torquemada's burnings?—were allowed by some strange fortune to usurp a place in the most sacred spot in Spain. There was a little fertile garden to the back, with an ample supply of running water, which used to sing away right below my window. The top of the house was quite open to the south, forming a sort of balcony, where the people sit and work in hot weather, enjoying the cool breeze from the mountain. Thither I ascended, and this is what I noted down: "One watch-tower, set as of old in a garden, is the only work of man between me and the Sierra. The air is transparently clear. There is not a solitary cloud in that

blue, blue sky. It is so pure, that the great ridge, though twenty miles away, looks quite close at hand."'

Lord Archibald writes his recollections of their meeting at this time:

'Dr. Hamish proved a splendid guide, and we passed through the lovely courts and houses of the Alhambra Palace, carefully inspecting all the details.

'We saw the fountains of the Lion's Court, the high-domed rooms with all the cusped and intricate stucco work, so peculiar to the Moors. It looked like congealed wax, the work of bees rather than men. Above all for colour, the gorgeous tiles, gold and red and blue, and loveliest of all where the softer green of the prophet prevailed. There was one form of tile, with white and green, and a very peculiar brown in it.

'We stood in the vast forum overlooking the valley, and before us were the buildings of the Generalifé with its little garden and running streams and flashing fountains.

'In one of these rooms Ferdinand and Isabella and the whole of their court received Christopher Columbus. All is unchanged. The other windows look over the swiftly running "Darro" river and the steep slopes leading to it. All is unchanged.

'I reached Granada from Malaga, passing through the long tunnels of three great mountain ranges. All trains were carefully guarded by armed police. It was a time when all the country was disturbed by the general elections. Business was at a standstill, and the danger of robbery and murder was always present.'

The Doctor writes:

'Nowhere will you find a more polite and obliging people than among the working-classes of Spain. While I contracted a slight acquaintance with several of the dwellers in our little lane, there was one, indeed I may say there were two, with whom I struck up an intimate friendship, and to whose grace and beauty I fairly lost my heart. They were sisters, "Salvadora" and "Encarnacion" by name, of the respective ages of four and six. Although Spanish women are not beautiful, Spanish children very often are. But two more delicately beautiful children than these I think I have

never seen there or anywhere. The elder, for a wonder, was fair, and was perhaps the more beautiful of the two; but love is proverbially blind, and my affection went out most to my little Encarnacion, a cherub in bronze, with dark hair, large, coal-black, dazzling eyes, the sweetest little mouth—I often tasted its sweetness—and a sort of strange, sad smile. She was a demure, grave little maiden. Not a little, perhaps, of her demureness, of her delicate beauty, as well as of my affection, were due to the fact that I knew she was starved. I knew my cherub's home, and it was an empty kennel. I came to know her father, a decent and poor labourer. I came to know her mother, and she was a good-looking, perfectly moral, lazy, lounging, gossiping slattern, the curse of a household in Spain and all the world over. My dear little pet would not have been so wretchedly ill-clad, and so wretchedly ill-fed, if her mother had used her arms instead of keeping them akimbo at her door, as I often saw them, and if she had used her fingers more and her tongue less. I have still the most delightful recollections of our little rambles together hand in hand, and of thoughts crossing my mind as to the possibility of buying her or stealing her, wicked suggestions, of course, which were promptly repelled. The upshot was, that for love of Encarnacion the whole household became my pensioners, and for the short time I was there they had a blessed respite from what I fear was their chronic state of semi-starvation.

'The month of May came in, sweet everywhere, but exquisitely beautiful here in Granada. May is the month of Mary, because the sweet month of flowers. May Day is specially sacred to her. The Church of Rome, so kindly and human in many of its ways, seeks to mingle in all the joys and sorrows of its people, and to sanctify all the seasons of the year. There was to be a special service that night in the Parish Church, in which the children each brought a little bunch of flowers as an offering to Mary, the priest taking the gift from the young hands and laying it on the altar. After dinner I went out in the bright moonlight to see the service. The church was but a step or two from our lodgings, but these few steps were close by the Moorish Palace, and under stately trees, where the interlacing of light and shadow was wonderful. I could not help repeating to myself, with a slight alteration, the lines of which Sir Walter Scott was so fond:

'"The dews of summer night did fall;
The moon, sweet regent of the sky,
Silvered the old Alhambra wall,
And many a tree that grew thereby."

'What a contrast between the brilliant moonlight outside and the dark interior of the church, which was lighted up by two or three sputtering farthing candles. At first I could hardly see what was going on, and could only hear the great, dark, empty space filled with sweet young voices, all singing with their utmost vigour a beautiful air with which I had been made familiar for some time before through daily practisings in the house. But what pleased me most was to see the evident affection which existed between the poor old priest, whose vestments seemed very shabby, and his young flock. As the little figures went up with their bunches of flowers they reverently kissed the hand of the old man, who then gave them his blessing. I confess I would have liked to get his blessing too.'

Travelling back through Spain and France, he reached London the last day in May. 'Two hours at Calais waiting for the tide. Oh! the coast of England, with its lovely spring verdure—also, the pale faces of the English girls, after the Spanish! I am back again in my own dearest land.' His colleague had written to him that the new elders had been ordained, and 'everything passed off well, only it was to me a very trying day, and I am feeling the responsibility. Many will be glad to see you back, but no one will be so thankful to see your face and hear your voice again as "the stalwart son of your old age." If you were to stay away much longer, I fear you would scarcely recognise your son.'

The Duke was not in London when he returned. He had spent the early part of the year in America, and wrote to announce his return later to Dr. Mac Gregor in Edinburgh:

'LIVERPOOL.

'We have just landed from America after a beautiful passage. I was delighted with Canada, especially its glorious rivers. They are indescribably beautiful, from the purity of the water, the finely wooded banks, the superb salmon, and the beautiful birds!

'I saw the great white-headed eagle catch a salmon and lift him out of the river—a thing very few have seen!'

The Doctor felt the fatigue of the journey, and made a halt at Peterborough, which he was to know more intimately in later years. 'Could not go much to the Cathedral. The close very beautiful: I have not seen anything finer in Spain. Dean Plumptre preached to the volunteers on "Missions." I took the Communion, full of gratitude to God for His mercies.'

He got to Edinburgh early in June, but there was a fresh disappointment in store for him. He was attacked by what he describes as fever and 'ague'; probably, in these days, his special enemy the mosquito might have been accused as the author of his ill health. Through the whole winter a malaise had hung about him, lost sight of often amid the excitements and distractions of his life, but whenever he was at rest an unwonted depression had asserted itself. He put himself in the hands of his medical adviser, and the verdict was not according to his hopes:

'Examined by Dr. Sanders. Alas! he does not like my condition. He forbids me to preach for months. Miserable! My own foolishness in hurrying home. A grand result of my stay in Spain. Forbidden work of every kind. Have pity on me, O God, according to Thy mercy. I am allowed to see no one but my servant.'

On the 17th he says, 'Making preparations to go to Russia.' He wrote to his friend Mr. Binnie:

'*June* 5, 1879.

'I saw Professor Sanders to-day. His report is that my chest is all right, but that I have not got back my strength. I am, therefore, to be laid aside still, being peremptorily forbidden to do any work.

'I am used to knocks; that is one. This is another, after being assured that the liquidators of the bank were, on the full payment of the second call, to free me from responsibility, they now refuse to do so.

'Sanders recommends a little sea voyage. So I must look about me for some way of smelling the sea.

'Don't fret about me. I don't!'

By the middle of June he was again a rover on the high seas, and after the first shock of discovering that his health forbade his return to work, he enjoyed being again on the rolling tides, and having new experiences in life:

'*June* 21, 1879.

'*Leith to St. Petersburg.*—At 4.30 P.M. on this day six months and at this hour I sailed from Greenock on board the Anchor Line S.S. *Assyria*, with Captain Campbell, for Lisbon and Gibraltar *en route* for Malaga, in search of health. To-day, I have set sail on the same sad mission for St. Petersburg, on board the S.S. *Petersburg*—Captain Barnetson.

'A free passage has been most kindly given me by the owners, Thomson & Co., through the good offices of my friend and elder, Mr. Thomas Aitken. We were delayed more than an hour in starting by the fouling of the sand in the harbour. There were a large quantity of barrels of naphtha shipped on board. A most unpleasant cargo, as it was all on deck, and none allowed to be put in the hold for fear of the leakage spoiling the rest of the cargo.

'As the ship had only come into Leith from her last trip on Thursday, the men had been over-wrought, and as a result had flown to stimulants, the consequence being that most of them were half drunk.

'It rained when we left, and by 7.30 there was a thick fog, with the steam whistle blowing all the night, which was rather unpleasant. Otherwise, the ship was delightful.

'I have got a large state cabin—with plenty of room and of light—all to myself.

'As I found on the *Assyria* that Captain Campbell had been a friend of my brother Dugald, so I find that Captain B. had known him well, and he bore the same spontaneous testimony to his high character and ability, and he mourned his untimely death. How pleasant it is to hear this of him!

'I have come on this voyage by the advice of Dr. Bruce, who believed that it would be the best thing for me. This to me is as the voice of God, to which I bow, committing myself calmly into His hands, and being willing to submit in all things to His heavenly will. May He prosper the object of my voyage, making it the means of restoring me to a measure of health and of strength for the good of His Church, and for the glory of His name.

'8.15.—Thick fog; going dead slow. Glass falling. Captain B. examines the chart, and finds that we are clear of the Isle of May. What a perfect type of the British sea-captain he is! short, thick set, active, kindly, a manly fellow. What an anxious time they have!

'A ship's horn, blown by the mouth, is going quite distinctly on the port bow, but there is nothing visible. How much need for watchfulness and trust in God.

'22.—Raw, rainy morning; thick as ever. Slight sensation in my right side. Bad weather for me. Much information from the captain and my fellow-passenger, Mr. Coutts, regarding the rotten state of Russia, and of her Church. They think that Nihilism is more a religious than a political movement, due to a growing intelligence against the superstition of the Greek Church.'

The weather continued thick, and he says he sat quietly in the deck cabin, where the captain relieved his tedium by tales of his own strange experiences, and his trust in God and His providence:

'Altogether, with the perpetual searching haar, which would not permit me to be out in safety above a minute or two, this has been a weary time. One cannot read nor walk. But there is always God in heaven, and the departed to hold communion with. What a pleasure to be in the company of God-fearing men, as the captain and Mr. Coutts evidently are.'

As they sighted Jutland the weather improved, and his spirits rose with their usual buoyancy:

'Sitting on deck writing. The sea beautiful: long stern rollers, the wind being right aft, and the sails set. The sea deep blue, covered with white horses as far as the eye can see.

'Before reaching Copenhagen wrote letters to send with the pilot—a good-looking old man, with fine face, thin lips. More of a gentleman to look at than any Spaniard I have seen. I have never seen waters, not even the Thames much less the Clyde, so crowded with shipping as the Sound of Copenhagen. I am keeping well, and enjoying it all amazingly. The sea does me a world of good. *Gracias a Dios.*

'In the Baltic provinces of Russia, along which we have

been passing, the Lutheran religion prevails, and German is spoken. One of the very worst days we have yet had. Heavy rain and sea. I have never got my head for one minute out of doors. As I write we are in sight of Cronstadt, and it is blowing a hurricane. The royal sail has been torn, and a piece of it blown into the sea. Fortunately, the wind is astern or we should catch it.

'*June* 28.—Rose in time for custom officers, twelve in number. A quiet morning after the fearful gale last night. I am waiting to go with the captain at noon. The ship is lying away from all others, in consequence of our cargo.

'I am struck already with the soft voices of the Russians. The speech in some respects not unlike Gaelic, the language abounding in "sh" sounds. After getting all the casks of petroleum off in a lighter, the captain made for the entrance. Just as he was going in, he was told there was no room and he would have to wait.

'There are four steamers lying side by side waiting to get into the harbour. It is so choke-full, repeatedly they have been baulked of getting in. The loss of this is great, the ship costing £30 a day. Got in at eight. Had no idea of the difficulty; steamers mostly English. How they can manage a large steamer through such intricate windings seems to me a marvel, and yet passing with hardly a touch. The working-men are poor-looking, ill-clad, ill-fed creatures.

'Passed several floating docks with workmen by hundreds pulling and singing, or rather shouting as they pulled. Outside the harbour man-of-war boats plying on every side, nice-looking men with white caps.

'The anxiety of the captain in getting into a berth here must be something tremendous. I had no idea that they could manipulate a vessel in such a way; the customs officers have never left her, and have not broken their fast to-day, poor beggars. The pilots are paid by Government at the rate of £2, 10s. a month. Lying beside us is the battered hull of an old English three-decker taken at the Crimea, one of the wooden walls of Old England. The harbour is immensely too small for the traffic. Quite light as I write this at eleven o'clock. Clearer than an average dull day in Edinburgh. I express here my admiration for the seamanship and temper of the captain.

'The enormous barges which convey the stuff to St.

Petersburg are lying all about ; huge, unwieldy-looking things they are, holding three or four hundred tons. Many of them are built on the ice and need no launching.

'The situation of St. Petersburg is beautiful. It seems to rise out of the water at the very head of the gulf. The shore on either side clad in foliage. Midway the dome of St. Isaac's shone out a blaze of gold. On arriving took a drosky, the funniest little baby carriage, with barely room for two. Driver in a blue dress like a woman, with band round the waist and funny felt hat. A wooden arch keeping shafts out from the wheels. The beggars are very graceful. An old woman bowed with the dignity of an emperor. Got a very kind reception.'

'St. Petersburg, *July* 4, 1879.

'My dear Lady Frances,—When your kind letter reached me I was down again with one of those knocks on the head to which I have been long accustomed, and had neither strength nor heart to write and say God bless you and your husband in your new home, and make it, what I have no doubt it will be, the happiest home on earth. I shall esteem it a happy day when I cross its threshold and make the acquaintance of your husband.

'Doctor Cumming put me *en rapport* with the movements and doings of you all. He was looking well, fresh, and hale-like, but weaker in his limbs, and longing for the air of his Highland Elysium. There was never a heart bigger than his nor fuller of love, and it rolls in a great, full-volumed stream to the house of Argyll.

'I am here in clover, living in a charming wooden house, the oldest in St. Petersburg, next to the wooden hut from which Peter the Great superintended the erection of this floating and really beautiful city. The weather is delicious, and the sunsets such as neither Inveraray nor Rosneath can surpass, which is saying all that can be said. Yesterday I was up at Lake Ladoga, and would fain have sailed northwards over its blue waters to Lake Onega, and so on to the North Cape, as I may do some day.

'I left my card for Lord Dufferin the day on which he arrived, and hope to see him before returning.'

From diary :

'I went to the monastery of Alexander Nevskey, where I saw a little service for old frail people who could not stand

out during the long service. I was struck with the venerable appearance of the priest officiating, and the fine voices of the young priests who chanted, their long hair parted in the middle. The tomb of Alexander Nevskey, the great military saint of Russia, was opposite, enshrined in massive silver.

'The monastery is immensely wealthy, but it does not keep its wealth in cash, which a needy government might find too handy to be able to resist. In these churches I have seen what I have never seen in any Roman Catholic country: people of all classes, from the highest to the lowest, merchants and countrymen, kneeling reverently down, bowing to the "Ikorooraois"—that is the screen which conceals the Holy Table from the gaze of the vulgar, and it is the principal part of a Greek Church. It is the veil that divides the Holy of Holies. There are no seats even for the Emperor. The old priests during the service lean on their pastoral staff.

'In Greek Churches the Table of Communion is never called altar, but is "the holy table." There is no sacristy as in the Roman Catholic Churches, the robes being kept in the room of the Holy Table, behind the iconostasis, which has three doors in it, one in the centre before the Holy Table, and one on each side by which the priests and deacons pass out and in. None else are allowed there. The centre door is only used in the celebration of the Holy Mass: this part of the church is the sanctuary. It is typical of the Holy of Holies.

'Everything is symbolical in the Eastern Church, and these symbols have been in use from the very earliest ages of the Christian Church. The four columns supporting the dome are the four evangelists, and the dome is the symbol of Heaven. One access is given to mankind.

'There are three thousand English in St. Petersburg. Mr. Nicholson, the esteemed agent of British and Foreign Bible Society, is making way in Russia, and is sometimes supported by the priests, who are a kindly set of men, and not nearly so bigoted as their Roman Catholic brethren. At the door of every house in St. Petersburg they have a watchman night and day, called a Dvormik, ostensibly to watch against incendiaries throwing petroleum, but also with a political purpose—to note those who go out and in, to see that there are no suspicious characters about. They say that since these men have been appointed, the fires have

been far fewer. They have an elaborate system of watch-towers all over the city to guard against the dreaded foe.

'Went out in drosky with Mr. Eales—our driver as usual elaborately crossing himself at every church he passes, beginning with the head, then the left side, each time of crossing requiring him to touch his person nine times. This in crowded streets is rather awkward, as the Russians drive furiously, and while he is invoking the saint there is a chance of his passengers getting into trouble. We crossed the Bridge of Boats to the Winter Palace.

'We had great fun by my attempting to imitate the Russian method of saying "Wo" to a horse, which is utterly unpronounceable, and is caused by the rapid motion of the two lips in making the sound "Tr-r-r-bh." "Tha" is "Gee up."'

There were several efforts in the diary to write the Russian language. Fortunately time if not patience failed him, and he lapsed again into his mother tongue.

He concluded his visit on the 9th July, seeing Lord Dufferin before he started. 'He was very gracious, but vexed I had not gone to him sooner.'

From a letter:

'Having had many opportunities during my brief stay in St. Petersburg of meeting with Englishmen long resident in the country, and familiar with its ways, I have been often struck with the strong points of resemblance which obtain between the two peoples who occupy the opposite extremes of Europe, the Russian and the Spanish, a resemblance arising from the fact that both peoples are, as yet, in a very low stage of civilisation. Among both there is the same widespread ignorance and superstition, the same disregard for truth and honesty, the same corruption and bribery everywhere, the same discontent with the existing Government, the same abundance of inflammable material, the same possibility of a great revolutionary explosion. A week in St. Petersburg would cure many of our politicians and editors of Liberal newspapers of their delusions about Russia, especially as the great champion of oppressed nationalities. Those who know a great deal more about the matter than they do would tell them, with one voice, that her charity in this respect should begin at home. Amid

much that was sad to hear, it was pleasing to observe the universal admiration and respect with which the Czar is regarded by Englishmen, as an upright, honourable, and pure-minded man, whose shoulders are overweighted by the burden of Empire.'

On his return voyage he began the habit of committing to memory the things he wished to be able to recall. Always a bad sleeper, he rested the over-excited nerves by repetition of poetry or portions of Scripture. After one of these wakeful nights he would occasionally bemoan that he had made himself yet wider awake, trying to recall the proper sequence of verses in some long poem, the repetition of which he had hoped would have had a different effect. He records learning sixteen of the Psalms, and parts of Isaiah, and says, 'Found it quite easy. A good habit.'

'*July* 20.—In St. Cuthberts for the first time since my illness last year. What changes in that time. My dear colleague, Dr. Veitch, gone. On the second Sunday I conducted worship in my dear church, and heard my colleague, Mr. Barclay, preach as minister of St. Cuthberts a good spiritual sermon.'

The feverish attacks recurred, and the doctors enjoined the strictest care, and the continued use of quinine.

In August the Duke bade him join the *Columba* at Rosneath, sure that the soft airs of the West would cure him of all ills. The doctors, thinking of the effect of the ship's company upon his spirits, bade him depart, but not without his quinine.

He was met at Clynder pier by the Duke, in the yacht's gig, with his daughters Mary and Constance. On getting on board it was obvious he was feverish and ill at ease. Dr. Macdonald, the Duke's medical attendant on his yachting expeditions, took him under his care, and watched him through the night. 'The Duke has not sailed owing to my illness. He has been to see me many times to-day.'

He steadily improved, and the weather was all that could help him. This time they were able to make for the island of Tiree, which was new ground to Dr. Hamish. Some of

the party stayed in Island House with Mr. and Mrs. Macdiarmid. They have many memories of this visit, the Duke and his guest going on expeditions to see the geology of the island, and to visit the crofters. The Duke had his gun, and said if nothing else was visible he could at least bag a Doctor of Divinity. Dr. Hamish was in the highest spirits ; the fever left him, driven out, like an evil possession, before the winds of the West. He 'revelled' in the drives across the white sands and thyme-decked turf, and his vision was wrapt in the glorious islands spread around.

'*Sunday.*—To church, and heard a young student preach well. The Duke very pleased. Drove to the north end of the island, and visited one of the houses shaped like a bee-hive. It is a divine land! The beautiful "reef," and the shore with its shells and sand. We went to Hynish, and the Duke told me the story of Skerryvore Lighthouse.'

The two, who had enjoyed themselves 'like boys,' went back to the yacht. Dr. Hamish had, of course, made himself at home with all in Island House. Mrs. Macdiarmid had not long been married, and remembers his parting: 'Take care of yourself, and I wish you well through your trouble. I take a great interest in a young mother,' and as he left her, she saw the tears of remembrance were in his eyes.

They returned by Iona, with its old memories and new landmarks, and the Doctor went to Columba's Port of Landing, and stood beside the cross which the Duke had placed in memory of the Duchess, who was an unforgotten presence in the thoughts of this friend.

He visited Doctor Cumming at Loch Baa, his visit being recorded by his old friend :

'A CLERICAL ANGLER

'There is a brave man in this Scottish land,
A sturdy shoot from Rob the red Mac Gregor,
Against the Devil stoutly swore to stand
With fiery breath, and arm of brawny vigour ;

In high St. Cuthberts shrine from week to week
He rolls his peals of evangelic thunder,
And thirsty souls in streaming thousands seek
To hang upon his lips with sacred wonder.
Where is he now? in holy pulpit not,
With store of Gospel arrows in his quiver,
But standing wistful by a dark brown pot,
To lure the glancing salmon from the river;
Return, return from fishful reel and rod,
And fish for souls of men, O man of God!

'JOHN BLACKIE,
'Loch Baa.'

On rejoining the yacht: 'The Duke read me a letter from Gladstone, saying that the question of Disestablishment is not to be meddled with in the meanwhile. *Gracias a Dios!* Ten years more and the dear Church will be perfectly secure.'

It was a happy cruise in every sense of the word. Three of his 'pupils' were on board, Lord Percy joined the yacht, and the party went to Skye. They encountered one or two storms, and the Doctor enjoyed the great rollers, and 'the beautiful behaviour' of the yacht.

There were readings in the cabin at night. One of the pupils writes: 'We read poetry every evening, and the thud of the rain on the wet deck and on the cabin roof I can hear now. Also Hamish's voice, and my father's delight in the readings of Tennyson and Dante.' It all had to end, and the *Columba* came round to Rosneath. The Duke invited him to Inveraray for the sake of his health. 'But, no!' He presented the Duke with a stick from the Alhambra, and from his retreat at Gourock he watched the yacht 'pass out of sight, with its dear cargo. They waved to me, and fired a salute in my honour.'

In October he was permitted to resume his work:

'Preached to my people the unsearchable riches of Christ. An immense crowd. I was none the worse, and am cheered by the doctor saying I may stay at home this winter.

'*November.*—Gladstone at Dalkeith. Tremendous spate of clatter! He was here all the week, and finished his campaign by meetings in the Corn Exchange, and addressed twenty thousand in the Waverley Market.

'Lord Rosebery and Mr. Gladstone came to St. Cuthberts

after morning service, asking if I was to preach in the afternoon. I have been speaking with less force, and consequently with less damage to myself, eighty-two words per minute, for thirty-five minutes. I spoke very seriously on Job vii. 3, Isa. xxxviii. 1. The result is with God.'

The year ends with the destruction of the Tay Bridge.

'Blown into the river by the terrible gale. A train on it with seventy-five people. All the thirteen great girders fell, one 245 feet. Can think of nothing else! Those lives have been offered as a sacrifice for the public safety of generations to come. A sad night. The worst calamity which has taken place in this country.'

The Duke wrote to him:

'*December* 30, 1879.

'We have had an awful smash of our fine trees. Hundreds down, and some of the most conspicuous and beautiful in the place.

'But one can't think of it in the face of that fearful Tay disaster. These poor people had probably very little consciousness of the horror of their position. The flare of light is a kind of nightmare.'

CHAPTER XIII

THE NEAR AND THE FAR

1880-1883

'Out and in the river is winding
The links of its long red chain,
Through belts of dusky pine-land
And gusty leagues of plain.

'Only at times a smoke wreath
With the drifting cloud rack joins,—
The smoke of the hunting lodges
Of the wild Assiniboines.

'Even so in our mortal journey
The bitter north winds blow,
And thus upon life's Red River
Our hearts, as oarsmen row.'

'*January* 1, 1880.

'DEAR FRIENDS, MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION OF ST. CUTHBERTS,—For yourselves, for your households, for all near and dear to you, I wish a Good New Year.

'Another year lies before us. God only knows what it may bring, and whether the end of it may see us here or *there*.

'Will you suffer one to whom your welfare is dear, and to whom God has been speaking very closely, to say to you—Begin this year, and every day of this year, with the resolution to seek and to get a firmer trust in God; greater nearness to Christ; a clearer sense of forgiveness in His blood; a stronger grasp of the unseen and the eternal; greater preparedness for death; and, in all things, the help of God's Holy Spirit? All these things are within the promise, and therefore within our power. We may have great need of these things before the year is out. Let us get them, and wherever this year may lead us, and whatever it may bring us, it will be to us a Good New Year.'

The year 1880 with its dissolution of Parliament and the formation of Mr. Gladstone's Government brought anxiety to all those who cared for the National Church of Scotland.

Dr. Mac Gregor had watched the rising hopes of the Disestablishment party, and he had no trust in such assurances as Mr. Gladstone had sent to the Duke the previous autumn. He had been with Lord Colin Campbell, then the member for Argyll, on the yacht, and had given him 'a hearing' on the subject of the Church. 'Lord Colin promised to be more firm in his public declarations against Disestablishment.'

Lord Colin had many further dealings concerning Church politics with 'Dr. Hamish.' They did not always agree. One of the assistants in St. Cuthberts still recollects a walk where, differing from the Member of Parliament on some political point, 'Dr. Hamish' besought him not to be 'a complete fool.' It did not disturb their mutual regard, and after a visit to Cumin Place Lord Colin writes:

'I shall always look back to my quiet week with you with great pleasure, to the emphatic censure with calm indifference, to the praise, which unlike the blame is invaluable with unqualified approval, to the punctuality with envy, to the example of unflagging energy in mind and body with admiration.'

He kept an uneasy eye on Mr. Gladstone, and notes in March that in a speech at Gilmerton, 'He spoke very temperately of the Churches.' In April Mr. M'Laren was returned for Edinburgh. 'Liberals have gained thirty seats. The success of that party is now determined.'

'*March* 1880.

'DEAR LADY MARY,—It was a very great pleasure to hear from time to time both indirectly and directly of your movements, and to know that they were not to be curtailed by the dissolution of Parliament. You are happily saved the most dreadful deluge of speeches which ever afflicted a patient public since the Tower of Babel. I never remember anything like it! It is sore at the time, but will be soon over, and with what issue no one can tell. For nothing have I been more sincerely thankful since the beginning of

the campaign than for the moderate tone assumed by Mr. Gladstone yesterday, with regard to the Church of Scotland. In case the papers may not have reached you, I extract the following: "The question of Disestablishment in my opinion is a question which can never be decided satisfactorily except it be, whichever way it be, by some clear and strong and decided manifestation from the people of Scotland. So far as I have seen, this question has not been before the people of Scotland during the proceedings thus far of the present election. I for my part see no likelihood whatever that it will be, and I certainly should be a party objecting strongly to any attempt to filch or take an advantage against the Church of Scotland from an accidental circumstance. It is the people of Scotland to whom it has been referred. That reference must be a real reference. There must be a real consideration in order to be a real decision. Nay, the decision must not only be real: in my opinion, it must be a manifest and pointed and undeniable decision in order to bring about any fresh issue or any great change in regard to the National Church."

'You will not wonder that I have written out these words when I tell you that I gave earnest thanks to God for them on my knees this morning. If the Church of *your* fathers is to perish, let it, first of all, prove worthy of death.

'A thousand pardons! This will find you near the end of your Italian journey, stored with a host of delightful remembrances of Venice, Milan, and Bologna, and "la bella Firenze." My memories of the same scenes are all clouded by a great and irreparable loss, the loss of one who was with me when I last went over them, and whose presence was brighter to me than the bluest sky of Italy.

'This will reach you before Easter Sunday, with all its joyful and strengthening memories. Go and worship in the church of my friend and quondam Roman "colleague"—Donald Miller, one of the very best of men, whose only fault, as I have told him, is his being a Free Churchman! He, too, poor fellow, has passed through many trials. If you should see him, will you remember me to him?

'Your sisters leave for Chester, taking an hour by the way for Carlisle Cathedral. The stalwart station-master, Mr. Irons—one of my elders—will see to their comfort as they leave Edinburgh. Come back safe and well. Heaven guard you all.'

During the elections the Duke wrote to him:

'CANNES, *April* 1880.

'We came here last Wednesday. We are all amazed by the elections. I had no idea of it. I felt sure that the Government would lose a great part of its majority, but I never thought it possible that they would come to such a smash. I am not without grave anxieties for the future. But it is at least well that the new Government should not be dependent on Home Rulers for its majority.

'For myself I look to office with positive loathing, for many reasons. I like my independence. I like freedom of movement, and I have lost all zest in mere political success. What I can still enjoy is nature and the society of those whom I can love and respect. On particular and special public questions I am as keen as ever, in a way. But on many other questions I am not in sympathy with either side —the narrowness of Toryism or the antipathies of Democracy, and so I should like to be out.

'But I may, and probably will not be able to do so, and the prospect makes me feel low, and the present as one of the "perplexing paths of life."'

'*March* 1880.

'DEAR LADY FRANCES,—If I had money I would build a grand cathedral like Seville, and I know who the architect would be. I wish some good old lady would leave me half a million, and between your husband and myself we should make a church of it.

'Long ago I used to lie and dream of nights about cathedral building, and many a fair structure, with the highest spire in the world, have I reared in *the air*. There is a teaching, an elevating and a purifying power about a building like Seville, which moves and awes me like nothing else.

'The Doctor keeps me posted up in your doings. He calls almost every other day, and we have long talks together. To-day we drove to Duddingston, but we did not try "the jougs" at the kirk door. Useful articles, whose days are unhappily by.

'It has been here a delightfully open winter, although March came in like a lion, fierce with sleet and snow, and will therefore go out like a lamb. I have nothing to say except the old word, "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee, now and evermore."'

'*May* 23, 1880.

'DEAR LADY MARY,—Before this reaches you two short years will have brought round your most memorable day, full of sad but, bless God, blessed recollections to you all. Among the many things for which you have all cause to be deeply grateful, I think your dear mother's memory is the greatest of them all. You can never associate with her a thought that is not high and noble and pure and worthy of her as she now is—a sainted mother in heaven. What a treasure, what a legacy to you all in this world of shows and shams and unrealities! I cannot conceal it that much which I think I see in you and in your sisters, which is higher and better than I find in many women, is due to the fact that she was your mother. It was in her nature to despise all mean and ignoble aims. May that same spirit ever be the guiding star of all her children, ever inspiring them with the high ambition of living worthily and well!

'When we think of our dear ones, happy, safe through the storm, and at rest in the sunshine of our Father's dwelling, it seems almost wrong and selfish to weep. We must not grudge them their deep repose. *Requiescant in pace!* Be it ours by humble faith and lively lives to make sure that we shall meet them again, and our hearts shall rejoice!

'All good be with you, my dear Lady Mary! May your path in life be as sweet as yourself and as smooth as I wish it!'

The Duke was appointed to the Privy Seal in Mr. Gladstone's Government, and in June wrote:

'I am so glad to hear you are enjoying the Clyde views —so associated with all my happiest days. I like to think of you there.

'Public affairs are more anxious than I ever knew them. Abroad and at home there is mess everywhere. I often wish myself out of it. But that would not be duty.'

He spent the year in his usual way. His health was good, and he preached regularly. His mother was still living at Spoutwells. Her great age and failing memory were much on his mind. He finally decided to bring her to Edinburgh, that in his own house he might watch over and care for her comfort. It meant a farewell to the home

of his childhood, and he lingered amid the familiar scenes—'sitting under the chestnut tree—I went to the spring for silver water.' In September he went to Spoutwells 'for the last time in my mother's lifetime,' and brought her safely to Edinburgh. 'Thank God, my dearest mother is now under my roof, and is very comfortable.'

The autumn months were passed in the *Columba*, and with his annual visit to Balmoral. The year closed in anxious consultations 'with Charteris and Phin about Disestablishment. We had a conference with T. G. Murray and James A. Campbell.' It was a year when 'Church Defence' began to take shape in new committees and associations. His opening prayer for 1881 was that he himself might depend more on the grace of God, and might live ever nearer Him. 'I give thanks for the many opportunities of work in the Church, and pray especially that God will preserve the dear Church of Scotland.'

To a friend:

'*Dec.* 20, 1880.

'My faith is that not one member of our great human family ever left this world at an hour that was not the best for him and for the world. Lord, increase our faith!

'The Christmas time is coming in darkness to you in many ways: all the more may you be partakers of the light and peace and triumph which it brought to our sore-stricken world. "In the world ye shall have tribulation: be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Let me wish for you an ever-increasing fellowship with Him who brought peace on earth and good-will towards men.'

The winter of 1881 was noted for its severity:

'*January* 21.—Heavy snow. No kitchen fire. Pipes frozen. The 17th the coldest day for a hundred years. Ten degrees below zero. On the last day of the month pipes thawed, kitchen fire lighted for the first time after fourteen days.

'*Feb.* 3.—Mr. Parnell and all the Home Rulers (38) suspended from this sitting. Bravo!!

'*Feb.* 5.—The greatest of living Scotsmen, Thomas Carlyle, died to-day at Chelsea. Born at Ecclefechan in 1795.

'*March* 5.—This week in the House of Lords the retention of Candahar has been decided upon. The vote 165 to 76.

THE DOCTOR TENDERLY HANDLETH HIS BADGER. CALGARY.

DR. MACGREGOR MEDITATING AT "HIS OWN VERY TENT DOOR" AT EVENTIDE

'*March* 6.—Snowing heavily. A great congregation in St. Cuthberts. I baptized twelve children.'

The assassination of the Czar, Alexander III., took his thoughts back to Russia, and he wrote to the British Ambassador. Lord Dufferin replied:

'I was so glad to get a letter from you, and you may well believe how deeply I sympathise with the sentiments you express. The late Emperor in his personal intercourse was perfectly charming, with a very engaging manner, and full of consideration for every one about him. Fortunately, I attended the parade on the Sunday on which he was killed, and thus had the honour of a short conversation with him and a last shake of the hand.

'I have duly received the address from the Provost and Town Council of Gourock, and I have sent it on to the Secretary of State.'

In May he gave his first lecture in St. Giles. 'Spoke with comfort for seventy-five minutes. The President of the Court of Session there. "The Church of the present day. How far it is an outgrowth from the past, and an expression of the existing religious thought and life in Scotland."'

He went to London to preach in Crown Court Church. Dr. Cumming was dead, and the life of the historic church was at its lowest ebb. He answered a call to come over and help it from one of the elders, Mr. Macvicar Anderson. No minister had as yet been appointed, and the whole condition of the church made an appeal to his loyalty and friendship.

Early in the year he had a letter from Archbishop Tait's chaplain, Mr. Randall Davidson:

'We are full of difficulties and troubles here, owing, as the papers will prove to you, to the vagaries of extreme men, between whom the old Church has a fair chance of being pulled to pieces. But she will weather the storm, by God's grace, and come out all the stronger. *Nos passi gravior.* But one small result of the bickerings and backbitings that are going on is that my hands are very full. Don't come to London without letting us know. We will

take the greatest care of you, and you shall do just what you like all day. You will not expect the Archbishop or me to be very free during daylight hours.'

He stayed at Lambeth Palace, and from there he went on Sunday morning to preach in the Scots Kirk of the Crown. As he was setting forth the Archbishop, who had often expressed a wish that he could himself have listened for once to the characteristic oratory which had now become famous, called to him from the top of the palace stairs, asking where he was going. The minister looked up and answered firmly, 'Where your Grace cannot come!' 'Where is that?' demanded Archbishop Tait. 'To Crown Court Church.' The Archbishop turned him right and left, and, seeing no attendant chaplains, leant over and, from a mouth guarded by his hand, he whispered low: 'I wish I were coming with you.' 'We draw the line at Archbishops,' and, without waiting for the reward of such daring words, 'the wild Mac Gregor' fled from beyond the shadow of the Lollards' Tower.

The Duke and his family were naturally in a church which the Duke had attended in the days of its famous minister. The word had gone out that another great preacher was again to be heard, and many gathered into Crown Court. Among the congregation was the Honourable Edward Bouverie, one who had spent much of his life in Parliament, and had seen and heard many of the greatest orators of his day. The impression made upon him by the preaching of Dr. Mac Gregor was very great, and he never failed to speak of it as among the most remarkable things he had ever heard, and to bid those who had summoned him to the church never to omit to give due notice if such another opportunity were within his reach.

From Lambeth he removed himself before 'Derby Day.' He had been offered a seat on a coach to see this race. He accepted the invitation with delight.

He enjoyed the humours and scenes of 'the road' and of the race. The keen-eyed crowd soon noticed the clerical

garb, and probably also the animated enthusiasm of the passenger, and they hailed him with shouts of 'Hulloa! Spurgeon!'

Princess Louise had returned to England after her severe accident in Canada, and while Dr. Mac Gregor was in London he had seen her, and she had spoken to him of her strong desire that he should accompany the Governor-General on his proposed journey through the North-West of Canada. Lord Lorne had himself written on the matter, but the Doctor had not taken the invitation very seriously, or thought of it as a possible plan.

Princess Louise knew how keenly he would be interested in all the opening fortunes of this country. She knew how vividly he would convey these impressions home to the mother country, and, from every point of view, she urged the plan upon him as a call of duty. On the last day of May he received a telegram from the Governor-General—'Hope you are coming. Boat 16th. Liverpool-Quebec best.' The answer flashed back, 'Yes,' and the next day 'at a meeting of session I informed the elders about Canada. They were much pleased. I wrote to the Princess.'

It was a happy thought to take Dr. Mac Gregor as the Spy, the Reporter, and the Chaplain of the party. In his many journeys he had studied the teeming cities of Europe, the deserts of Palestine, and the cultivated plains of countries whose civilisation was outworn before the discovery of America. He belonged to a clan which had long been landless, and he had within him the instinct so strong in the Celtic race that the land is for those who can go in and take possession.

When day after day he moved over the face of the prairie, saw its virgin fertility yielding its golden store to the toil and sweat of the pioneer settler, learned the riches stored in forest and mountain, he saw the vision of a great future for the country and for his countrymen still at home.

He remembered the overcrowded and degraded conditions of the cities in which he had worked, and the yet more con-

gested districts of the Hebrides and Ireland. The labourers were too few on the soil he was treading, too many for the work in the old country.

If he could not at once return, as the spies of old, laden with the fruits of the soil, he could and did chronicle in lengthy letters to the *Scotsman* and *Courant*, in minutest detail, the rich harvests which stood waving above his head, and he counted over the ears in the bearded grain.

Day by day he met those who had left Scotland and were settlers in the land:

'You can never go far in Canada without meeting with a Scotsman and a Highlander, but they seemed to be specially abundant here. Both in Collingwood and neighbourhood there are many settlers from Islay, Tiree, and Mull, and other parts of Argyllshire; and a fine, hardy set of men they were. Though it was busy harvest-time, an immense crowd had gathered, and the reception was specially enthusiastic. After addresses had been given by the Municipality and the Society of St Andrew, and many Highlanders had welcomed their chief with all the enthusiasm and warmth of their race, a procession of some thirty carriages was formed, and drove round the pleasant little town, the Mayor, Mr. Dudgeon, who comes from North Berwick, pointing out with justifiable pride the many objects of interest—the windmills, *e.g.*, for pumping up water from the wells. Green arches with kindly words of welcome had been thrown over the broad and boulevarded streets, which were crowded with well-to-do people gathered in pleasant groups under the leafy trees. There is a custom here which would do much to beautify many of our bald Scottish towns. On the 1st of May, which is called planting day, the people turn out and plant trees along the streets. As the procession passed along, a fine old man, above eighty years of age, came tottering out upon crutches to have a first and a last look of his Highland Ruler. The carriage was stopped, and in a moment Lord Lorne was standing by his side, warmly shaking him by the hand. It was fifty years since he had left Islay, but it was the old tongue which supplied John M'Diarmid with the language of endearment as he kept saying, "'S mi tha toilichte, 's mi tha toilichte." ("It is I who am glad. I never thought to see this day.") Quite a crowd,

and a most affectionate one, surrounded the old man and the young. We passed another and an older native of Islay, a lady, ninety-one years of age, who had her children and her grandchildren around her, and who was saluted in the same simple and kindly way.

'Many of the Indian names are very pretty, but are abandoned from the difficulty and variety of spelling, one name having been known to the Post Office under forty-nine different forms. The change which names undergo is rather odd. The French change Somerset into St. Morissette, a saint whom it would be difficult to find in the calendar. The English change Lac à la Reine into Rainy Lake; Point Aux Pines into Point Oxpins; and Lac à la Queue d'Oiseau into Birdtail Lake, abbreviated into Birtle. The little village was mostly a collection of rude log huts, occupied by French half-breeds, who live mainly by fishing, and who are a thriftless and unimprovable race. Here, as elsewhere, it was pointed out to me, as a striking distinction between the French and the Scotch half-breeds, that while the latter take more after the father, and are fond of husbandry, the former, as a rule, take after the Indian mother, and retain the love of a wandering and restless life. Both are peculiarly liable to the scourge of consumption. Standing at the door of the finest house in the place was a young half-breed, the son of a Scottish mother—a lady-like woman, whom some strange chance had long ago brought from Kirkcudbright to spend her days on these lonely shores. He was a lad of delicately-cut features, bearing on them but too plainly the marks of that fatal disease. I would fain have sat and talked of the old land and of other things to the poor widowed mother, whose humble home, she told me, had twice been visited by Governors-General. The Scottish blue-bell, growing at her door beside the wonderfully glaciated rocks, helped to send my thoughts back to the old land.'

In the nineteen weeks of his journeyings he saw everything that was to be seen, and his notes were copious, illegible, and ranged over every conceivable subject. From start to finish his enthusiasm never failed him, and he returned home the most valuable Emigration Agent Canada had ever welcomed and sent back to report her prosperity and need of men.

Mr. Law wrote to him from the *Scotsman* office on his return home:

'You have burst suddenly upon us all in quite a new light, showing marvellous powers as a descriptive reporter. I fear, like many others, that you have altogether mistaken your profession. You should have been a newspaper special!'

'LAKE SUPERIOR, *July* 1881.

'DEAR LADY MARY,—What do *you* know of Canada? You were never at Halifax, nor at St. John, nor did you sail for days on its great inland lakes. Therefore it is in pity for your ignorance that I write this letter.

'We left queenly Quebec by special train on the 18th, passing Montreal by night, and reaching Toronto on Thursday forenoon, various stoppages being made on the way to receive and answer addresses.'

'THUNDER BAY, *July* 25.

'I had to stop abruptly to pack for the overland journey to Winnipeg. We are just about to land. This magnificent bay bears an almost ludicrous resemblance to the scenery round about Mull. Thunder Cape and Mackay's Mountain, distant about fifteen miles, guard the bay on the other side. The former is as like Gribune as possible. Pie Island, so called from a trap cap just like the Dutchman's cap, guards the entrance, while the long and low Isle Royale stretches farther on to the south. Volcanic islands lie scattered westwards. To complete the resemblance there is a cloudy sky above, and the mists are rolling up the sides of the Thunder Cape as I have seen them rolling up Gribunehead.

'We have had two Indian pow-wows, one near Soult Ste. Marie was very touching. The old chief, addressing your brother, said, "I am glad I have seen you, father. I thought I should never have seen you."

'How good and unselfish and kind His Excellency is! No wonder he is winning golden opinions in Canada. One cannot be with him without loving him. I am glad that he has so nice a staff. Colonel de Winton is specially good and charming, and devoted to him, who has had a busy time of it, paying visits at every point of interest, making up the addresses and clever extempore speeches.

'The news of Dean Stanley's death met us as we were

nearing Toronto. In him the Church of England has lost by far her greatest son. He filled a place which none other did or could fill. *Sic fiat voluntas tua.* I am so glad I saw him when in London. Your brother is the very picture of health. It was so good of him asking me to accompany him. We are just about to land. We go about a hundred miles by railway, and then by canoe and wagon, reaching Winnipeg on 29th.'

'SILVERHEIGHTS, WINNIPEG,
'*August* 5, 1881.

'MY DEAR FRIENDS,—When on the 12th June I intimated to you from the pulpit that I was about to leave for Canada on a kind invitation from the Governor-General to accompany him on his proposed expedition to the North-West, I had no idea that the journey over the prairies was to occupy so much time as I fear it will do, or that the first week in August should find it hardly begun. From Halifax to Winnipeg I have travelled—by rail, steamboat, and canoe—a distance of 2570 miles, and yet Winnipeg is only at the beginning of those boundless prairies, which are to be the future homes of millions of our race, and which it is the special object of the expedition to explore. The utmost point which will be reached at the base of the Rocky Mountains is, as the crow flies, more than one thousand miles from here. There are daily passing close by the house where I write this, long trains of creaking Red River carts, without a nail or a piece of iron about them, drawn—some by Indian ponies, some by bullocks, and carrying freight for Fort Edmonton. It takes them just three months to reach their destination, which is not farther away than our most Western point will be. Our journey to and from Winnipeg will be nearly three thousand miles; and as, with the exception of about one hundred miles of railway, the entire journey will be performed in wagon and canoe, you can quite understand that, even with the very best appliances, the return to this point cannot be earlier than the first week in October. This would just enable me to get back in time for the Communion; but would deprive me of the pleasure, which I have not had for some time, of holding communicants' classes.

'These my colleague will, as formerly, kindly take for me. I would fain, at this distance, try to reach by letter, when I cannot do so by voice, all young persons in connection with the congregation who know that they are old enough to take

their place at the Table of the Lord, and urge them not to miss this opportunity of obeying their Saviour's dying command, but at once to join the class for young communicants. As their minister, I heartily invite them to do so, and entreat them not to let the shyness which is natural to youth, nor the much-felt unworthiness which is natural to all, keep them from a duty which is not only important but imperative; and which, when humbly discharged, they will find to be most profitable to their own souls. I often think that the eye of the Great Master, who "knoweth our frame, and who remembers that we are dust," and who can be touched with the fellow-feeling of all our infirmities, beholds at a Communion Table no more beautiful sight than the young person who is there offering the freshness of his days to Him. Having been so much away from you of late years, I cannot but regret my prolonged absence, nor help feeling it as the one serious drawback from the pleasure and the profit which I expect to receive in the great journey about to begin. While I must confess that the thought has sometimes crossed my mind, Is it not your duty to give up the journey, and return? my judgment has said, on the other hand, what I am sure you will all agree in holding, that, in the circumstances, this would not be wise. An opportunity has come to me unasked, for which I cannot be too grateful, not only of visiting Canada and studying its institutions under the most favourable circumstances, but of doing what it will in a few years be no longer possible to do, of seeing the great prairies in their state of nature, and the Indians of whom for generations it has been the home, and whose destiny it is to be either civilised or swept away. With the kind help of Mr. Barclay and of Mr. Watt, whose services I greatly appreciate, I have endeavoured to secure the best possible supply for the pulpit during my absence.

'I suppose you will have seen from time to time in the public prints the progress of the expedition thus far. Let me therefore only say that, shortly after my arrival, I went with the Governor-General to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, visiting St. John's and Halifax, and that after all the miles I have travelled, and the many places I have seen, there is no spot which, for its blended beauty and fertility, I have admired more than the Grand Prè and the Valley of Annapolis, in the latter province, sung by Longfellow in his "Evangeline." There river and sea, wooded hills and plains

of unsurpassed fertility, thickly dotted with the homesteads of thriving farmers, make up the scenery we know and love so well. Ontario even not excepted, I have nowhere seen in Canada a more lovely spot, nor greater appearance of general comfort among the people. There, as everywhere, I have found our own people to the front. Everywhere the cry is the same, "Send us more Scotsmen." Montreal I passed at night, and cannot, therefore, speak of it. But it must be a fine city indeed if it surpasses Toronto, whose broad, well-built, and busy streets, its princely villas, its eighty-five churches and twenty-one public schools, to a population of ninety thousand, its colleges and its Meteorological Institute, fairly entitle it to the name of the Queen City of the West. There are large portions of Ontario which look as well cultivated, and almost as thickly peopled, as the agricultural districts of Scotland. But "Westward the course of empire holds its way." And even from Ontario families are migrating in great numbers to the still more fertile lands of the Far West. Winnipeg, which, ten years ago, consisted of little more than a few wooden shanties, is now, on the whole, a well-built city, with a population of twelve thousand. Like St. Paul's, in Minnesota, it will, in a few years, be the centre of a network of railways, and the capital of a populous and wealthy province. One has only to glance at the soil, a deep rich loam, as black as coal, and at the crops which grow upon it, to be assured of its inexhaustible fertility. Emigration is pouring in. Four hundred Swedes are just coming in. The little wooden station where I sat for an hour yesterday was piled with luggage, and every day adds to their number. Labouring men make two dollars, or 8s. 4d., and skilled mechanics above three dollars, or 12s. 6d., a day. But as it is only on the lines of railway, and at such centres as Winnipeg, that skilled labour is required, as the demand must therefore be limited, and as the expenses are proportionally great, I could not advise mechanics to risk coming here on chance. The staple work of the country must ever be agriculture. Until the land gets more settled, the right people to come are young men with sufficient means, not only to buy land, build house and outhouses, plough and sow the soil, but to keep them going till their first crop is sold. The words which I saw yesterday on one of the triumphal arches state the truth—"We want willing hands to work our fertile soil."

'We got there last Saturday after a hot and fatiguing journey from Illunda Bay on Lake Superior, two days being spent on the new-laid railway, and three in canoes, paddled by Indians, on the Great Lake. This house, which was placed at the disposal of the party, is five miles from Winnipeg, and is connected with it by telephone. The heat on our arrival was terrible, 98° in the shade; but a thunderstorm, such as we never have at home, cooled the air, and but for the swarms of flies and mosquitoes, which keep up a constant and feverish irritation, life here would be enjoyable enough. I am glad to say that while all churches here work harmoniously together, the Presbyterians take the first place throughout Manitoba in number and influence. They have a hundred churches and stations where, ten years ago, they had none. On Sunday first I preach in Knox Church, the finest ecclesiastical building in Winnipeg; and on Monday morning we set out on the great prairie journey. There will be eighty horses for the party and sixteen wagons, four of them carrying presents for the Indians. There will be two interpreters and a guide, and an escort of twelve, to be increased to twenty-five, of the mounted police. It is expected that we shall make forty-five miles a day. We shall rest every Sunday, when Divine Service will be conducted. I send my sincere sympathy to all the sick, the sorrowful, and the bereaved of the congregation. I commend you to God and the word of His grace.—Your affectionate minister, JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

'HUDSON'S BAY FORT,
'QU'APPELLE, NORTH-WEST TERRITORY,
'*August* 18, 1881.

'We reached Qu'Appelle last night. It is 375 miles from Winnipeg. I embrace the opportunity afforded me by a great Indian pow-wow, which is to take place in the square behind me, to throw a few hurried notes together, and, as well as the din of interminable Indian speeches will permit, to inform you briefly of the movements of the expedition since it left Winnipeg on Monday the 8th. The railway took us in a little over three hours to Portage la Prairie, a distance of 68 miles.

'We found the covered spring-carts, or chars-à-bancs, which were to carry us to the Rocky Mountains and back again, waiting for us among the long prairie grass. They are light,

three-seated carriages, carrying six persons, and drawn each by four horses, and were expressly made for the expedition. The backs of the seats fold down, turning the carriage into a comfortable bed or ambulance in case of hurt or sickness. After a short drive of five miles through rolling sand-hills and scrubby oak, we reached our first camping-ground at half-past seven. The sun had just gone down in wonderful glory in that deep saffron sky which was to be so familiar a sight on the plains; while right opposite, the great, white, full-orbed moon was rising above a bank of clouds in the eastern sky. The delicious air was happily also to be a common experience. I may here state once for all, that what experience I have had of the prairie convinces me of the truth of the statement which every settler makes to me, that the climate is perfection. With the exception of their brief rainy season, especially in the end of May and June, the air, both in summer and winter, is clear, dry, and bracing. With the exception, perhaps, of the Arabic desert, I have nowhere seen finer light effects than here at sunrise and sunset. A man feels wonderfully self-complacent who has witnessed the former of these phenomena. It is a costly luxury, and it is not every one who is equal to the effort. But here, in this prairie life, there is no virtue about it. It is simply a necessity. When a large caravan like this has to do forty miles a day, you must make an early start. At four every morning the bugle sounds the réveillé, and up you must get, creeping out of your warm buffalo bag, drawing aside the mosquito curtains, which feel cold and damp to the touch, and then out into the fresh crisp air with the first flush of the dawn, your reward being a glorious sunrise and a cup of hot tea; and then at night you will see the sun go down on the prairie—a great round ball of yellow gold, touching the level line of the horizon and slowly descending below it, just as you have seen it go down at sea.

'And here, too, once for all, let me speak of the camp and its arrangements, which, like all else pertaining to the expedition, is under the management of Colonel de Winton, military secretary, assisted by the aides-de-camp, Captains Chater, Percival, and Bagot. Dr. Sewell of Quebec, one of the leading physicians of Canada, is medical attendant. There are in all 77 men, 96 horses, 27 vehicles, and 21 tents. There are 47 men of the mounted police, whereof 22 form

the escort, the rest being in charge of the transport, whose size is partly due to the large quantity of presents which are being carried to the Indians. Even with this large transport, many of the packages had to be left behind. There is not a finer body of cavalry in the world than these mounted police. There are but 300 of them, but they manage to keep in perfect security and order the whole of the North-West, a territory as large as France and Germany combined. Thanks to them, and still more to a persistent adherence, on the part of the Dominion Government, to a course of firm but righteous treatment with regard to the Indians, I have it on the authority of Mr. Dewdney, the Chief Indian Commissioner, that a person can travel alone over the whole of the North-West, and be hundreds of miles from a white man, with absolute certainty that no Indian will hurt him in purse or in person. An opposite policy has produced quite a different state of things on the other side of the boundary line. There no man dare trust himself, unarmed and alone, within the reach of an Indian. The North-West police are drilled and dressed exactly like Dragoons. They wear white helmets with brass spikes, and red tunics with yellow facings, and are armed with carbine and revolver. Being never out of the saddle, they are magnificent horsemen. On Monday last, several of them who had been in the saddle for some hours during the night, searching for runaway horses, came into camp, after a ride of sixty-three miles under a burning sun, they and their hardy little horses looking wonderfully fresh. The necessities of their wandering life make them handy at everything, from mending a saddle to driving a four-in-hand. Up till the other day, each man, on completing his time of service, got a soldier's warrant for 160 acres of land.

'The two essential conditions for a camping-ground are wood and water. The place that best supplies these necessities between thirty and forty miles from the starting-point is fixed upon, and somewhere about six o'clock the long train comes to a stop. Colonel Herchkomer rides ahead and points out the spot. The carriages wheel round to it and form a line; then come the baggage wagons, which are placed also in line. All the arrangements are made with military precision and promptitude. Each wagon is numbered, and each driver knows exactly what to do. The horses are unyoked, and in a few minutes the ninety-

six of them are scampering over the prairie or rolling in the long grass. How they get them all together again is to me a mystery. In a few minutes the escort have the tents pitched in a double line, forming a little street, the large mess tent standing out from the rest. The servants have brought in the luggage, fixed the camping-bed and mosquito-curtain, carried water for the nightly bath, unless there is a lake close by large enough to bathe in, and made all things right for the night. The camp looks quite a busy and picturesque village, with the red coats moving about and camp-fires blazing in all directions. When the arrival is early, and the mosquitoes permit, it is delightful to loll about on the sweet-scented grass, full of flowers and aromatic plants; or to sit quietly at the tent-door in the delicious air and watch the sun going down. Whatever writing is done must be done then, if one is not too tired with the long day's drive. I am sorry to say that nothing can induce me to think charitably of the mosquito. You can secure complete immunity from their ravages by night, and the blessing of unbroken repose by a well-made and well-adjusted mosquito-net. These provided for us are the best I have seen. They are made of fine but strong netting in the form of a bag, large enough to cover the camp-bed, terminating in a cone which is fastened to the top bar of the tent, and is kept distended by three thin bits of cane, which join together into a hoop. The fringe of the bag is heavily shotted with lead to keep it close to the ground. It is practically impossible to escape them by day, as the face and hands cannot be always covered; but even when they come in swarms, a measure of protection is afforded by long-armed leather gauntlets and a gauze veil which fastens by an india-rubber band round the helmet and tucks in under your coat. It has a little window of talc sewed in. The little purse which it forms in front is a convenient receptacle for your eye-glasses. The mosquitoes have been to me so constant a torment on the prairie that I have rarely been able to travel without the encumbrance of the veil or to eat with ungloved hands. They have been the only drawback from the pleasure of a most enjoyable tour. Such reading and writing as I have been able to do has been done either within the veil or the sacred and blessed enclosure of the mosquito-net. They tell me that we shall have done with them in a little, and I only hope it is true.

The start, as I said, is early, and we are *en route* by six o'clock. After trying the day's journey in two stages, it was found so severe upon the horses that it had to be broken into three. We travel at the average rate of five miles an hour. Some time between nine and ten we halt for breakfast, when all the horses are turned loose into the prairie. The numerous lakelets along the trail abound in snipe, teal, duck, and widgeon; and there is no lack of prairie hen or grouse. Some members of the party have been blazing away along the route, and the moment the halt is made for breakfast are scouring in search of game. As many as thirteen brace have been brought in of a morning —no unwelcome addition to the stock at the disposal of the two cooks, who are busy preparing a sumptuous *al fresco* breakfast. After a halt of two hours, the long train is again moving along the trail, one of the routes which for generations the Indians and the people of the Hudson Bay Company have used in their marches from Winnipeg westward. It is simply a cart-track, with a general direction of west by north, such deviations as are made being due to marshes or muskegs, and to camping necessities. It therefore always leads from wood and water to wood and water, and passes often through the poorest instead of the richest soil. The road will be for a while as smooth and far more soft than a well-kept highway; then will come a morass, which the horses flounder through with the wheels up to the axle; then a stretch of jolting ground, which shakes one to pieces. On the whole, it is singularly pleasant travel. There can be nothing more picturesque than our long line of wagons and ambulances, varying from a quarter to half a mile in length, as it winds along the rich grass lands, as level as a bowling-green, or ascends wooded uplands as trim and clean as a well-kept English park, the officers in charge riding by the side of the first carriage, a redcoat beside every driver, the cavalry riding half in front and half behind, as advance and rear-guard. It is quite a little army on the march. There is another halt in the afternoon, when the horses are again unyoked, and then comes the march to camping-ground.

'THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S TOUR

'RAPID CITY, *Aug.* 10.

'Of the long journey of 2480 miles from Halifax to

Winnipeg, no part was more interesting than the 190 miles from Lake Wabigon to the Rat Portage, the two intermediate points which have been reached by the railway system between Lake Superior and Manitoba. The 220 miles of completed line from Thunder Bay were comfortably travelled in a train which had been improvised for the use of the Governor-General and party, and which consisted of common platform cars seated with planks. The line lies through a poor land, densely covered with thin spruce and larch, which had suffered terribly from forest fires. I took special notes as we passed along, and for these 220 miles there stretched on either side one almost continuous tract of dead trees sticking up like bare telegraph poles, with young wood, of course, growing up between. After the long and dusty railway journey, which occupied thirteen hours, we reached our first camping-ground on the evening of the 26th July. It was quite a fairy scene. On a bank overhanging the beautiful lake, which well deserves its name of Wabigon—the lake of flowers—the railway contractor who had taken charge of the expedition had erected several large and comfortable tents, flooring them with the flat branches of the richly odorous balsam pine. There was a sumptuous *al fresco* dinner. From far and near eighty Indians had gathered in thirty canoes, bringing their wives and families with them. They gathered around the Governor-General, a motley crew, some of them clad in old-fashioned military cloaks, and all with streaks of various-coloured paints across their face. Their chief, Caugha-wi-osh, marked off from the rest both by his stature and his head-dress of eagles' feathers and claws—each feather marks a slaughtered enemy—presented an address in the Indian tongue, written upon birch bark, of which the following is a translation: "My Lord, I speak to you, through this writing, as the chief of the Wabigon Chippewa tribe. We have come here to-day in our canoes to meet our great mother's son-in-law, and her speaker for this country. We all shake hands with you through me, as their chief. We thank the Queen for her honest treatment of us and all Canadian Indians, as we have not been cheated by her agents. I wear this medal which you see upon my breast, given to me by the Queen, with the greatest love and respect; and we hope she thinks as much of us as we do of her." These Indians were all pagans and polygamists, but those who know them well speak in the

highest terms of their truthfulness and honesty. Partly, I believe, from interested motives, they have steadily resisted all attempts to send a missionary among them. There was a war-dance at night round a great log fire, and a weird and uncanny spectacle it was. Some twenty Indians took part in it, many of them all but absolutely naked. It was the genuine dance which they were wont to engage in before entering on the war-path or going through the interesting operation of torturing or scalping their victims. Two of them sat squatted beside a big drum made of buckskin, which they alternately beat with stout sticks, singing at the same time, in a high wailing pitch, words which sounded like "eh, eh! yah, yah!" The moment the music began, up started the tribe shouting in the same tones, rapidly moving their bodies up and down, the motion being from their knees, but not quitting their places, the old chief keeping them up to time by his yells and gesticulations. When the music ceased the dancers squatted on the ground, resting their elbows on their knees, chatting and smoking. In a few minutes the music began, when the dancers started to their feet. One of the dances was emblematic of their action on the war-path, striking their enemies to the ground, tomahawking them, etc. It was a savage sight. Each of these men had actually been on the war-path and had killed his man.

'We were up before six next morning, and after a delicious bath in the lake and an open-air breakfast, we were steaming along in a tug which had been expressly made for the party, with no other tools than a saw, an axe, and an auger. That sail under steam over a lake which two years ago was known only to the red men, marks the rapid change which is coming over the Western land. We landed on some of the beautiful islands which dot its surface, and gathered wild gooseberries, strawberries, raspberries, and cherries, which were growing in great profusion. There was nothing to mar the enjoyment save the tremendous heat, from which the whole party suffered more or less. By noon we had made forty-five miles, and were sailing up a river-like arm of the lake towards Seven Mile Portage, the steamer towing behind it a large canoe with the Indians who were to carry our luggage across the portage. We followed the regular Indian trail a little way to a clearing which had been made in the primeval forest, and where, round a blazing fire, lunch was

partaken of. The whole of the lake portion of the journey was taken charge of by John J. M'Donald, the well-known railway contractor, who spared neither pains nor expense to make the trip a thoroughly enjoyable one. The entire luggage of the party was carried over seven miles on the shoulders of Indians. Heavily laden as they were, they took the whole distance at a trot, resting only a few minutes midway. None who walked that portage will be likely to forget it. The tract lay through dense pine forest all the way, the interlacing of the tree-roots making it most difficult to travel. The heat was excessive, and there was not a breath of wind. The mosquitoes were the most numerous and ravenous I have yet encountered, causing intense suffering, which lasted for several days. We were all struck with the loneliness and silence of the forest. Not a sound of bird or beast was heard. This absence of animal and bird life is noticeable everywhere in Canada. I have never yet seen a single head of game in all the vast tract of country over which I have travelled. It will be different, I understand, on the prairies. Half-way across the portage we had to cross the skirts of a forest fire which was raging to the left. The fire was leaping from tree to tree with great rapidity, and the embers were still smouldering on the trail which we were obliged to follow. The Indian who led the way had his foot badly burned. Every way it was the hottest walk I ever had. No one suffered less from it than Lord Lorne, who was the first to reach the next lake, called Eagle Lake, which is some sixty miles long, and, like Lake Wabigon, thickly studded with beautiful little islands. A barge, attended by several canoes with boatmen all gaily dressed in blue caps, red jackets, and white trousers, was in waiting to convey the party to Garden Island, about two miles away, where twelve tents had been pitched as our resting-place for the night. The unexpected sound of the bagpipes floated a welcome as we approached, the piper, an old Stornoway man, and now a thriving farmer of Winnipeg, having come all the way to do honour to his chief. The pretty little island is inhabited by Indians. The first sheep they had ever seen had been brought for our repast, and created considerable consternation, especially among the Indian squaws, who took to their heels the moment they began to bleat. Before starting next morning I paid the Indians a visit, and was struck, among other things, by the ingenious cradle,

called "Tchikinage," in which they keep their babies. It is a straight board, shaped somewhat like a canoe, to which the child is tightly swathed, leaving nothing out but the hands and face. It can be hung up to the branch of a tree, or carried comfortably on the mother's back. The children laughed when I touched them, and seemed quite happy, as their mothers were made by a trifling present to their little ones.

'We were off by 7.30 on our voyage of sixty miles along the whole length of Eagle Lake. A tiny steamer tugged the large well-appointed barge along the lonely lake, which till quite recently had never known anything but the Indian canoe. They call a long reach of lake unbroken by islands a "traverse." On these traverses great storms suddenly rise, which are fatal to canoes. The Indians will, therefore, on no account cross them when they have the least apprehension of foul weather. The distance between Seven Mile Portage and the end of our water journey at Rat Portage, which is only 75 miles in a straight line, is, as we take it, 160. It is a route which was discovered only last year, and, though the longest, is by far the easiest of the three which have been used for the transport of material for the construction of the railway and provisions for the men. On one of these routes there are no less than twenty portages, some of them extremely difficult of passage. When one knows that everything necessary for the Winnipeg end of the railway has to be carried across these lakes and portages, he can understand why this portion of the line cost as much as £10,000 sterling a mile. For hours we coasted along beautiful islands, richly clothed with the finest timber I had yet seen in Canada, especially with pines —the Norway, the Jack, and the white pine. Beyond two little settlements of a few houses each—one a Hudson's Bay post, the other the head-quarters of the railway which will pass along the lake—there was no trace of human presence.

'As we passed the two houses dignified by the name of Eagle Lake City, a salute was fired, not of nineteen guns, but of as many charges of dynamite, which sent showers of splintered rock far into the air. We reached the end of Eagle Lake at six o'clock. A short portage brought us to Clearwater Lake, where a very pretty scene lay before us. There were ten canoes awaiting the party, each of them manned by six men in pretty uniforms, and all Indians except

the Scotch team who manned Lord Lorne's canoe, and whom no Indians could beat in the skill with which they handled their paddles, or in the speed which they attained. Strong, sinewy, good-looking young fellows they all were as they bent to their work, plunging their paddles into the water with the precision of a machine, and sending the light bark canoe like an arrow through the water. Each canoe had a little flag waving at stem and stern. There could not be a prettier sight than this long line of canoes gliding along the river-like lake between steep banks, where the birches were already assuming the golden hues of autumn, the waters so perfectly still that the tall pines were as visible below as above, and the silence unbroken save by the rhythmic beat of the paddles. It was already getting dark when we came to the last portage for the day, which was happily a short one. So admirable had Mr. M'Donald made his arrangements, that though he had more than a hundred men to direct, each man knew his work so well that there was no confusion, and the whole of the baggage and the ten canoes were carried across on men's shoulders in an incredibly short space of time. A short sail on Dryberry Lake brought us at 9.30 to our resting-place for the night. I must say it was a surprise to us all, and looked more like a scene from fairyland than from actual life. On the smooth sandy beach a little pier had been made. A broad balsam-carpeted approach led up to the largest of ten spacious tents, ranged in a line close to the water. On either side of the approach two huge log fires were blazing, by the light of which, as we reclined on the green carpet, we saw the successive canoes, with their dusky rowers, emerging out of the darkness into the ruddy glow. Each tent had two four-post beds, with mosquito-curtains. Two candles, attached by birch bark to the top of a stick, were already lit. There was every comfort which forethought could suggest and wealth supply. Every article of furniture formed of wood had been cut out of the forest but a day or two before. A sumptuous dinner crowned all, and gave the most satisfactory evidence that the enchanting scene was due, not to the wand of a magician, but to the practical skill and princely generosity of Mr. John J. M'Donald.

'The Great Plain was eighteen miles across; then came the pretty park-like uplands, exactly like those on the eastern side, and then the Great Plain on either side of the river

Qu'Appelle. The deep ravine which leads down to it, which begins so abruptly and deepens so suddenly, shows you how rivers may yet seam these flat plains. If you let your eye run along the level of the plain above the ravine, it exactly catches the level of the plain on the other side of the deep groove which the Qu'Appelle has cut out for itself. The Assiniboine has behaved itself in exactly the same way. We camped a little way from the mouth of the lateral valley on the flat plain which the river has made, and being close to its banks, were nearly devoured alive by mosquitoes. A drive of thirty-three miles along the peculiar valley, which I have not time to describe, and by the side of pleasant lakes, brought us last night to the spot where, through a long day, I have been sitting and writing these hurried notes, and where the utmost hospitality has been shown us by Mr. M'Lean, the able agent of the Hudson's Bay Company. Over the whole 125 miles there was not a trace of human habitation till we neared our journey's end. It is, indeed, the Lone Land. I wish, too, I had time to speak of the admirable Roman Catholic mission carried on here among the half-breeds, of which the head is Father Hugonnar. I have seen no more artistic arch on the whole of this viceregal tour than these poor priests and their dark converts erected, and I have nowhere seen a kindlier reception. The Fathers gave their address in French, to which, and in the same language, His Excellency made a long and happy extempore reply. Let me close this letter with the words which were the first written, and with which I intended to begin it. There are 1500 pure Indians here, and 150 wigwams or lodges, composed chiefly of Crees and of Saulteux, with a sprinkling of Stoneys and Sioux. They have come from the various reserves in the vicinity of the Qu'Appelle, some to receive their annuities of five dollars per head, man, woman, and child, the chiefs and headmen getting respectively twenty-five and fifteen dollars per head, with sundry presents, which are distributed amongst the band, consisting of clothing, ammunition, and flour. All are assembled to greet the Governor-General, and to tell him their grievances. Some of them have come distances of from 300 to 400 miles. Among them are many braves, one in particular, whom I saw in his tent, Ka-wa-ka-toosh, is the Pon man who was once the terror of the Blackfeet tribe, and a name known and feared over the whole of the North-West. One is struck with their

names. As they are called out by the interpreter, and translated into English, they step forward and salute their Great Brother. I had the pleasure of thus seeing "Standing Buffalo," the chief of the Sioux, "Loud Voice," "Little Black Bear," "Day Star," "Day Bird," "Yellow Quill," "Strong Quill," George Gordon, and a gentleman with the name of the "Man-who-has-got-the-stars-for-a-blanket," chiefs of the Crees and the Saulteux; and strong, powerful fellows many of them are.

'They have been encamped here for more than three weeks, and have to a great extent been fed by the Government. On Sunday last they had a great demonstration, known amongst themselves as the thirsty dance, which is intended either as an act of mourning for the dead or the initiation of young men into the rank of warriors. It lasted for three days, during which the performers neither ate nor drank. During the ceremony many voluntarily subject themselves to severe suffering. One of them had a wooden skewer thrust through the fleshy part of the breast on each side, with heavy weights attached to it. Another had a similar skewer thrust through the fleshy part of the back to which a line was attached, by which he led a horse round the camp. One of the poor fellows fainted, partly through pain, and partly through the exhaustion consequent on the want of food.

'Here they come, as I write, to the Great Pow-Wow in the square of the Hudson's Bay Fort. First of all are six men almost naked, with blackened bodies, shields, and long spears decorated with feathers. Each of them has as a head-piece the bushy skin of a buffalo head with the horns. They are Sioux performing the buffalo dance amid fierce shouting and prolonged "ughs." Beneath a canopy in front of the principal entrance stands the Governor and suite, and when the dance is over they gather round him, and a confabulation goes on. They tell him their story and he replies. They are splendid speakers, each point as it is put being loudly responded to. I wish I could describe the group of eager faces as I look on it now, the strange tongue, the strange dresses, the long black hair hanging far down their shoulders, the eagles' feathers. The pow-wow with the Sioux ended, the much more formidable one with the Crees begins with a great discharge of small arms. The chiefs occupy a seat in front of the Governor;

the braves are next ranged in a semicircle, while a great crowd, male and female, fill the space behind. The common people are in full dress, which consists of one blanket; but the feathers, and the fans, and the paint, and the ornaments of the great men, the tassels, the eagles' claws, the head-dresses (formed on the model of a peacock's tail), the furs, the sashes, the beads, the bells, the necklaces, the tatooed skins, the medals, the generally ragged and woebegone look of the men, what pen can describe? Most of them are smoking, and most of them are coughing, as they have good reason to do, seeing that they have been dancing half naked in the dew every night for a week past. There are many striking and some comely faces in the swarthy black-eyed crowd, and these are the redskins gathered in such numbers and in such circumstances as few strangers from Europe will have a chance of seeing again. Each chief is invited to tell his story in his own words, and it is a comfort to know that there is not a grievance of which the poor fellows complain which will not be carefully inquired into, and, if real, redressed by the Government, of which Lord Lorne is the head. As at Fort Ellice so here it has been a long interview, lasting over six hours. We start to-morrow morning for the still long journey westward. All the party are well.

'After a sound sleep, due to a fatiguing day, a delightful bed, and a close-fitting mosquito-curtain, each member of the party stepped from his tent into the bright blue water of the lake, a plunge into which was the best preparation for another long and hot canoe voyage. We were off before eight. An attempt was made to tow our flotilla by a steam-tug, but as the sparks from the wood fires threatened to burn canoes and canoemen, the paddles were resumed, and on, hour after hour, with but one brief rest, they tore along at the rate of forty-five strokes to the minute, as if their muscles were iron, crossing great "traverses," where the spray broke from their prows, each canoe coming in with a spurt at the end, after a pull of twenty miles. By Dryberry Portage we crossed to Mud Lake, before entering which each canoe was carefully examined, the leaks being soldered up with the help of two burning sticks and a little resin. Then came seven miles of waterway, much of it lying between gardens of water-lilies in full flower. We had crossed over White Fish Portage, which was the last of all, and which brought

us close to Rainy Lake, where some of the party brought in the tidings that a fine young fellow who was employed in carting the railway goods across the portage, and who at the time was carrying our baggage, had accidentally slipped off and was killed almost instantaneously, the wheel passing over his body and breaking his spine. Two doctors were with us, and both were present.

'After a week spent at Winnipeg, the Governor-General left for the prairie journey, by special train on the Canadian Pacific Railway, on Monday, 8th August, at 9.30 A.M. The train conveyed the party to the farthest point westward to which the railway has been built, distant from Winnipeg some thirty-five miles. Here we were met by an escort of the mounted police—a force which is of the greatest use in the preservation of law and order in the far-off regions of the North-West. This escort, which was under the command of Superintendent Henneker, had ridden from Battleford, a distance of 600 miles, at the rate of forty miles per day, to meet the Governor-General and assist in the transportation of the party towards the setting sun. They were a fine-looking and intelligent body of men. On the arrival of the party at the end of the railway, wagons were in readiness to take the baggage and the members of the party to the first camp, and as these wagons were to be for the next six weeks our means of transportation, some time was occupied in the orderly distribution of the *impedimenta* of the party. Our first camp was situated near the margin of a small lake, and as we drove towards it the sun sank slowly in the west, gilding the horizon with purple and crimson and the distant clouds with a rosy pink, and greeting us with a spectacle of surpassing splendour. Next day we reached a large tract of land known as the Big Plain, and as we journeyed across its wide expanse of land, level almost without a break, no one could help being struck with the richness of the soil; while, when we came across the farms dotted over its surface—one of which, of 500 acres, was sown in wheat—the unexampled fertility of the land, evidenced by the vast extent of golden grain, was apparent to all. Everywhere we found the people content with the change they had made in coming to this country—everywhere the consensus of opinion was to the effect that the land was exceptionally fertile in its character, and that the climate was, even in winter, all that could be desired. In

this connection, I may mention that at Rapid City we met a farmer who, during the coldest day of last winter, was occupied in thatching his house. Our next camp was pitched eight miles from Rapid City, near a small creek, where there were numbers of wild-fowl. An early start next morning brought us to Rapid City, a small town on the banks of the Little Saskatchewan. The farming land in the neighbourhood of the town is of an exceptionally good character, and a large number of English emigrants have settled in the neighbourhood, all of whom expressed themselves as pleased with their prospects and confident of success. To-morrow morning, at 5 A.M., camp will be struck and the march resumed for Fort Ellice, the next point from which letters can be posted.'

The Governor-General of those days has supplied a reminiscence of the Doctor on this journey, beginning with a scene during a thunder-storm in camp, which deeply impressed the Doctor at the moment, and which he narrates with all his usual powers of description:

'We camped that night at the end of the Touchwood Hills, on the verge of the Great Salt Plain, having made thirty-three miles, which may thus be taken as the breath of the rich, hillocky country bearing that name. The ground sloped down to a pretty lake which, from a pelican sailing overhead, got from us the name of Pelican Lake. The tents were stretched in a long line, so that every one might enjoy from his tent-door the pleasant view. There we spent a quiet Sunday, and had divine service. It had been a hot and sultry day, and as night came on, dark thunder-clouds began to gather overhead. Orders were given to see that the tents were well pegged, and every one was advised to have his things in order against the expected deluge. I reluctantly parted from my best friend, the mosquito-curtain, taking it down with my own hands and carefully folding it past for future use. After dinner we lay on the grass watching a spectacle such as I have never seen before, and which it is quite enough to see once in one's lifetime. Various members of our little party had lived in tropical climes, but they, too, confessed that they had never seen anything like it. The sky all round the horizon, but especially to north and south, began to lighten up in broad gleams

of momentary radiance. Then came great spiral columns and zigzag arches of quivering fire, which for some time rested on the eye as if carved out of the wall of blackness behind. The columns sometimes stretched from high up in heaven down to the ground, while the irregular arches covered great breadths of sky. Meanwhile there was not a sound, and the stillness was intense. The flashes grew in number and vividness, and seemed coming ominously nearer; while the cloud which they revealed as hanging close overhead seemed growing blacker. Lightning, they say, travels against the wind; and, with an uncomfortable feeling that that was our direction, we retired to our tents, and were lighted to bed by the perpetual blaze. The heat meanwhile was intense. Overhead I heard a peculiar buzzing sound, as of an innumerable army of flies, and wondered if lightning ever had a sound like that. I was told in the morning that a dense cloud of flies had passed over the camp, and filled the dining-tent, but what they were no one knew. The long lull was followed by a storm of wind, which came as in a moment, and blew as if it would have blown the tent down. Then followed another ominous lull, and then came the thunder!—and such thunder—roar after roar bellowing nearer and louder. Then again a lull, which seemed worse than the thunder; and then great drops of rain struck the tents like heavy pellets. The last and worst crash broke right above us. Happily no damage was done. Still it was a night long to be remembered. As one expressed it next day, it was like being under fire for the first time. It was even worse a little farther on, and was accompanied by a shower of heavy hailstones, which would have been fatal to any growing crop.'

'O Dear! Dear me! This is terrible! My! This is awful.' The scene, a group of low tents on a limitless expanse of grass, only visible at intervals by the help of blinding lightning—lightning that shone for a short but distinct space of time, as a quivering column between dark sky and yet darker rolling plain. It shone on a couple of men with spades digging a little trench round a tent whence the voice proceeded which uttered these ejaculations; sounds which showed a very vivid sense of observation, startled from uneasy slumbers. The voice was the same so often heard

in eloquent language from pulpit and platform, but never heard in tones of more convinced astonishment and unwilling admiration at the powers of Nature!

The Doctor had a tent to himself, and hoped to have a quiet night to write out his notes for the benefit of the *Scotsman*,—the result of his observations of the last week's prairie travel, when he had attended meetings of wild Red Indians, of settlers bent on making more than a canvas village, such as that made each evening by the members of the Governor-General's expedition in 1881, from Winnipeg to Calgary, *via* Battleford on the Saskatchewan. The settlers were talking of coming, and had only the equipment the Governor had, but less of it, namely horses and wagons, tents and rifles. These first-footers, the first to make an expedition for the purpose of settlement, were already convinced by all they had seen, by the success of the first half-breeds at Winnipeg and along the Saskatchewan, by the still greater success of the Canadian settlers (chiefly of Scots blood) about Winnipeg and Fort Garry, as it was called, that the prairies were to become very soon the home of millions. Probably, even they did not fully realise that not only little townships but cities of a hundred thousand men were to arise, and by 1912 were to assume the importance of great towns with an imposing array of streets and squares, factories and churches.

Many a spot on which we camped, thankful to gather buffalo dung for our fires, and get a duck or prairie partridge for our dinner, is now unrecognisable. Government Houses of important States or provincial areas mark these places to-day, in which Britain geographically, at least, would disappear. These early settlers hardly foresaw that in one generation that vast plain would be opened up by railroad systems, and these only the forerunners of the intricate network of ways of communication yet to be.

But the truth of all this 'to be' was often so exciting even in that year of 1881 that Dr. Mac Gregor's enthusiastic rhetoric would die down in wondering silence and brief ejaculations of:

'Dear me! Look there! Did you ever see such mountain distances of unscarped glorious land? You can have any number of Alpine Jungfraus and Mont Blancs and plains wider than those of Hungary, and rivers and lakes, and what more can man want? That afternoon, when Alps fringed the western horizon, there came up a cloud with flashes of lightning in its bosom, and the cloud came on and then divided, and advanced on us in two great storms, rolling sheets of darkness. Then, as the night closed in with furious thunder, we had to turn out and dig a drain outside, around the head of the distinguished doctor and saint.

'I listened to his exclamations as we tried to keep the floods from "winning in" below the eaves of his tent. A very grand effect was produced by the shooting columns of blue-white light, that shook, for some seconds, and then seemed to spread along the ground, seeking whom they might consume.

'At these times it is as well to have all rifles and metal put away out of the tent, so that if the electric current be attracted, there may be nothing which can cause damage.'

It is only the moral effect of lightning which can benefit man! The moral effect of the Doctor's theological lightning was partly seen during this autumn exploration of the North-West in 1881 by the Sunday morning scene, when all in camp assembled before the necessary march of the day, to hear the little Doctor read and give a short 'discourse.'

'A *short* sermon, Doctor, remember, to-day, for we must make thirty miles westward before dark.' 'Oh yes, Colonel,' the Doctor would reply to Sir Francis de Winton, who was usually the officer to make the announcement of what mileage we must accomplish for the day. 'Oh, yes, Colonel, and I 'll give you leave to make me a sign if I am over long.' And, after breakfast, the little congregation of Mounted Police, in red tunics and white helmets and yellow and black striped trousers, and teamsters, and newspaper-correspondents, Austin of the *Times*, Williams of the Toronto *Globe*, Roche of the French *Gaulois*, Sydney Hall of the *Graphic*, and perhaps a few wild Indians come to see what

fresh game the white men had in view, would gather near the little Scots minister who stood in his bands and black gown, and who himself was 'doing correspondent' to the *Scotsman*; and all would listen to his emphatic, Highland, deep-toned diction as he read and, as he put it, 'briefly expounded.' 'Had de Winton's signal to stop to be given?' 'Oh, yes! certainly, over and over again,' for the sky, overarching all, poured down light and beat with fervent heat on the minister, whose arms waved and voice rang out till the Indians thought that something very marvellous must be the outcome of the short dark medicine man's long incantations.

So the Doctor was regarded with grim silence, and many a redskin thought it might be of use to follow for a few marches the wagons as they travelled towards the setting sun. Farther west there were greater gatherings, chiefly of Blackfeet, summoned by Crowfoot for the Indian Council, near the present city of Calgary.

The Doctor, during these long drives in the char-à-banc or wagon drawn by a team of four horses, sat on a front bench with me, making notes for his letters to the *Scotsman*. His feet never reached the floor, his legs being too short. As the wagon-seat was necessarily subject to the jolts and sudden risings and downsittings, consequent on the roughness of the road, especially when a trot was attempted, this was a work of difficulty.

He wore a helmet always rather too large for his head, and big gloves with gauntlets. While defending him from mosquitoes, these would sometimes come off his hands, and the helmet would be jolted off his head. With an impatient, 'Did you ever see the like of that now?' the Doctor would gather up the scattered articles of his 'outfit' and try to wedge himself firmer into his uncertain seat.

He was always counselling the artist of the party to give more of the landscape, and not to limit his attention entirely to the figures of men and horses, which, he said, 'were more or less alike all the world over.'

He was never sick or sorry during the whole of the trip,

and except when in the grip of a thunder-storm he was ever cheerful. Always deeply interested in his conversations with the officers and men of the fine corps of Canadian Mounted Police, 'the riders of the plain,' who know every wandering Indian tribe, and most of the white vagrants whom, as far as possible, they have to keep in view.

Mr. Dewdney was a member of the party he was constantly consulting. He had had much experience in British Columbia, and was now in charge of the Prairie Police. This officer, always pleasant, was a great resource, and fully sustained the Doctor in his unbounded enthusiasm and belief in the coming greatness and prosperity of the country.

Mr. Sydney Hall, the artist of the party, enriched the pages of the *Graphic* with portraits of the Doctor in all the many aspects in which he was to be seen. Buried in the standing corn, energetically engaged in stamping out a prairie fire, meditating with his eyes on the boundless plain, talking to the Indians, or preaching in a hut, round which the Indians had gathered, listening to the great voice of the strange 'medicine man.' In one sketch the minister is preaching from the door of his tent, while a slit in the canvas behind his head frames it in a halo of light.

It was a time to him of health and happiness. He loved his company, and they found in him the best of fellow-travellers. Later in the year, when the Governor-General had returned for a short visit home, Dr. Mac Gregor writes to Lady Mary:

'I was overjoyed to hear to-day of the safe arrival of your brother, a prince among men, of whom you have all cause to be proud. His life, all through our long tour, was a daily lesson on the beauty of unselfishness. I never yet met a man who seems so utterly unable to think of himself, and who is so persistently and unconsciously watchful of the interests of others. Not one of our happy party but felt as I feel, and expressed it too, that the absolutely unbroken harmony, unbroken by the faintest jar, was largely due to the example set us by His Excellency. No one can be with him without learning to love him!'

For him the long journey ended all too soon, and he left

the camp-fires and the wide prairies with a long farewell of regret.

He reached home in time, as he had promised, for the autumn Communion. It was again a return to an empty home, for his mother had passed gently into her rest during his absence. He learnt from her attendant that there had been no suffering. She had been for her usual short walk not long before the end. 'In coming in for the last time, she said, "Put James's stick away. I shall not need it again." She never murmured. Her wonderful gentleness consisted with a character of remarkable strength. She had a vigorous intellect and great common sense.'

His colleague was severely ill after his return, so he had double duty on his hands. Wherever he went, and whatever he did, he thought and talked of Canada and its 'glorious North-West.' There were some who wished that he had been forbidden to mention any geography out of Palestine for a season, as Canada somewhat took the place of theological teaching.

He was always urging men and women to go out and make their future in the new lands. One young couple came under his influence, and, after some hours spent in his company, were almost committed to breaking up their home and settling in these dominions. There was no resisting the torrent of facts and figures and picturesque descriptions and glowing prophecies concerning this Promised Land to those who had only to make up their minds to go in and possess it. Two more unsuitable colonists could hardly have been selected, but fortunately a more discriminating friend administered a douche of practical common sense, which brought them out of the magician's enchantment, and restored them to the conviction that they had better abide in that position in life where they had been obviously placed. To one of the two the impression still abides, of the compelling force and 'magnetic' influence of the Doctor's persuasive eloquence, one more of the many illustrations of his personal influence which had to be felt to be fully realised.

He writes:

'*Nov.* 1881.

'DEAR LADY MARY,—Ask the Duke if he has seen or will care to see an admirable article in the Dec. *Blackwood* on the ancient English system of Duck Decoys.

'There is a weird and ghastly ghost story in the January number, which I have been advised not to read before retiring to rest. The scene is laid at Colinton, near Edinburgh, and the author, though it is desired to be kept private, is—Mrs. Oliphant.

'For the rest.—O Queen, live for ever! Thy slave hears and trembles; and in will but not in deed obeys. Mañana, mañana, mañana!'

The year was passed in his usual work and interests. His health was good, and he gave a large number of lectures on Canada and his travels in Europe, besides his ordinary work. There were conferences on Church Defence, both in Edinburgh, and when he went to London, with members of Parliament. The Duke wrote to him:

'*Ap.* 1882.

'I congratulate you on the evident failure (at present at least) of the Rainy movement, and don't you see, how the policy of silence is succeeding—"In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." I would keep this attitude of dignity, if possible, unless only for the purpose of making it evident that the Established Church will not oppose but welcome any action in the direction of re-union.'

The Government had its hands full with Ireland, and nothing more dangerous than 'Dick Peddie's motion' was on foot.

When in London he preached in Crown Court Church, to which the Rev. Donald Macleod had been called from Jedburgh. In a letter Dr. Macleod says:

'Every week brings one or two more to the Auld Kirk, and now we are really, on anything like a good day, beginning to have something of the appearance of a well-filled church on Sunday mornings.'

Mr. Macvicar Anderson triumphantly bids him come:

'Last time it was because we had *no* minister of our own. I now write in different circumstances. We *have* a minister,

and one worthy of all the affection and sympathy we can bestow. I now ask you once again to leave your great northern metropolis, and visit this little southern village.

'We are still at Crown Court, but we have now secured a first-rate west-end site, and I have good hope that if I am spared to invite you a third time, it will be to grace the pulpit of our new church.'

Crown Court always filled at the word of his coming, and he looked down on many a familiar face which he had first seen in his northern charges.

The marriage of Lady Mary to the Rev. E. C. Glyn, Vicar of Kensington, gave him entire satisfaction, and it added another to his many devoted friends in the family circle.

'It would be such a pleasure to meet that Mullah. I could fancy him, from his writing, to be such exactly as you describe him—I am sure a sound and beautiful soul.

'As to reading, my mind at this moment is a perfect blank. There is one book which I bring under your notice for the first time—the author one Wordsworth (you will get him from the library). When all others fail, try him. Commit the "Ode to Immortality" to memory, when you have nothing else to do and when *he* is away. God abundantly bless him and you!'

'*May* 31, 1882.

'Yes! I mean to be present on the fateful day and to give you my Presbyterian benediction! The Church of England is all very well, and will be very much the better when you are in it, but where would the daughter of your forefathers be without that said Presbyterian blessing? Echo answers—where? So that at once from a profound sense of duty as well as a sincere regard for you, I mean to be there.

'While Edinburgh and Scotland have never raised a stone to John Knox, I think an appeal for a monument to Tyndale, on the Thames Embankment, would meet with a very cold response.'

The Governor-General wrote to him from Quebec:

'Our newspapers are full of your laudations, and of your article which epitomises admirably our experiences. I hear of you from my father and Victoria as cruising with them

and preaching to the natives of Jura. Among what various scenes and persons have your sermons been preached.

'I often look down from the terrace on to the wharves, and wish I could see again a dark figure emerge from a boat, ascend the steps and then my wagonette; and I wish I could go again to the court and greet you.

'They say that we shall have eighty thousand of Canadians and others this year. Colonel M'Leod sends me the bodice of a Blackfoot lady, embroidered with elk teeth, which you know they value very much.'

An incident which occurred while calling on the Dowager Duchess of Roxburghe pleased him greatly. He found himself in the room alone with two young girls, to whom he talked till the Duchess came in. She then introduced him to his companions as 'A great friend of your grandmother's.' They were the daughters of Princess Christian. He said, the greatest compliment that had ever been paid him had been made in his presentation to the Princesses.

One of the most anxious thoughts in his pastoral work was the preparation of the young communicants of his congregation. They were always numerous and he felt the responsibility of their full instruction, and he desired to make the greatest rite of the Church as living and solemn a commemoration as it was to himself. In later years he presented each young communicant with a Shorter Catechism, in which he wrote their names and his.

Lady Constance, who was under his teaching and placed by him in Mr. Barclay's class, writes of her intercourse with him:

'My father placed me under him preparatory to receiving my first Communion. I had the desire very early in my life to receive the rite of confirmation in the Anglican Church. He took me with this knowledge. He no doubt thought it was a childish phase which might alter, but he never for a moment allowed it to affect our relationship, and he prepared me for that solemn entrance on a communicant's life, with a depth of spirituality for which I can never be sufficiently thankful. "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid." And, on that foundation of

intense personal devotion to Our Lord and belief in His Atonement and Risen Life, essential to Protestant and Catholic alike, he taught and led me.

'Often we left the study for a walk towards Arthur's Seat, but the stream of teaching flowed on, checked only by the exclamations "Beautiful! Beautiful!" as Auld Reekie lay blue and grey under its rampart walls. In later years, at Inveraray, it fell to me to be his companion in his frequent visits to my father. Often he arrived in winter when the westering sun was crowning the snowy hills, and the loch lay in unbroken calm, reflecting every line and colour as on an undimmed mirror. Then, as soon as he had had tea, he would say to me, "Out you come for a walk!" and he would tramp along "the dear beautiful shore road," glorying and exulting in the beauty which he said was not exceeded in any part of the world. As we turned homeward, he would stand with uplifted hand to watch the planet rise over Craig Dhu, or the moon casting a long silvery line across the loch.'

During 1883 one 'emigrant' decided to depart, and it was very much against his colleague's will. It seemed almost a Nemesis on his ardent advocacy of Canada and its prospects, when he learnt the determination of Dr. Barclay to accept the call of St. Paul's Church, Montreal. Dr. Mac Gregor must have been considerably 'straitened' how to walk consistently between the doctrines he had preached on Canada and its prospects, and his heart-whole desire to keep by his side 'the stalwart son of his old age.'

'The last Communion in St. Cuthberts,' he says sadly in April, 'of my brother and colleague James Barclay.'

In 1882 he had taken part in the ordination of the Rev. A. Wallace Williamson in North Leith, and a year later, speaking in a spirit of prophetic humour, he told the people of his congregation, 'if they were not good to him, he would come and take him away from them.'

As before, he was filled with fears as to what course the congregation would take in replacing Mr. Barclay. He wrote as usual to the Duke for his unfailing sympathy. The answer dealt with the affairs of State before he replied on the colleague:

'CANNES, *April* 1883.

'My letter about Chamberlain's[1] Radical and Communistic talk has, I think, done good.

'I am very sorry for you about your colleague. But don't be too anxious. The Church has had colleagues in the same charge who were at the opposite poles in doctrine, and they got on pretty well together. *Perhaps* you will have your own way after all. I have had a severe attack of gout and can still only hobble on crutches. But yesterday the nightingale opened his song in our garden and he has cheered us.'

When the Doctor was able to report the unanimous election of the young minister, he wrote with all his wonted enthusiasm and great thankfulness. The Duke asked for a more detailed description of 'the Prodigy':

'*July* 1883.

'I am truly delighted to hear of your anxiety about a colleague being well over, and the choice such as you approve. It must be a great relief to you. I know nothing of the man you call a young "Prodigy." Pray tell me in what respect he is a Prodigy? Is he a great preacher? And is he a good working minister?

'My speech on the marriage question was a sudden effect of indignation at a coarse speech from Baron Bramwell. I was very weak, and the weather so hot I was quite feckless. But I never spoke with greater effect, and it was said to have influenced the division. Why are Scotsmen going wrong on this?'

The last piece of work he and Mr. Barclay did together was the collection of a fund to purchase and renovate a church in Bread Street, which belonged to the U. P. Church. The object was also to make it a regularly endowed parish church. The total to be raised was £8000, and the ministers went to their congregation to raise £4000 of this. It was the first, and by no means the last, general appeal made for Church Extension: 'The ministers and kirk-session are very confident that it will not be made in vain. Every member should try to have a stone, however small, in what will be a

[1] The Duke here refers to the doctrine of Ransom.

parish church for the service of God and for the benefit of the poor long after we are dead and gone.'

There was enough opposition to put one of the ministers on his best mettle, and the expedition 'in a hansom with my colleague,' produced all the result he was determined to have. He wrote to Lady Mary:

'There now, that is right. Folkestone, the very thing! Cheerful outlook, the roll of the ocean and the fresh smell of the salt sea breeze. Never mind him! Get strong as fast as you can, and you will be much fitter for the desperate enterprise on which you have embarked—of keeping him in order.

'We have bought a U. P. Kirk which is making a row, a storm in a tea-pot, a flutter in the dovecot of the dear dissenters. We bought it because we needed it, which is the best justification I know for a purchase, whether it be a bonnet or a kirk, and we mean to use it for our own congregation, and for good, sound, honest work.

'Get the January number of *Good Words*, and both of you read by my orders, for mutual edification, the article on "Natural and Revealed Religion," by Principal Caird. It made my soul glad as indicating that Caird has not wandered, as some have asserted, from the truth. Read also the Bishop of Bedford's poem. It garred me greet.'

He paid a visit to Lord and Lady Balfour of Burleigh at Kennet. He was very happy there, and says that he found the Dowager Lady Aberdeen 'a saint. The place, and weather, and the family are all delightful. Went with Lord Balfour to Clackmannan Tower, and to the manse, and saw the Forth and the woods.' He preached in the church, 'very full, my sermon an hour and a quarter.' At Kennet some of their earliest consultations on Church Interests were held together. 'Thank God for all I found there!'

Reforms in St. Cuthberts Church, and in its services and the 'Christian liberality of his flock,' were in his mind. He had a passion for reducing everything to statistics, and had some prepared as to the nature of the coins that were found in the church plate. He probably read them aloud to an

attentive and possibly abashed congregation. At the two services 'Six hundred put in one halfpenny. Nine hundred and sixty-six, one penny. Eighty-nine, threepence.' The list continues on the down grade as the coins rise in value, till 'two half-crowns' complete the highest scale.

St. Cuthberts Church was entering on a new period of life and work. With Dr. Veitch, the old order which he had loved to preserve and which his colleague left reverently untouched during his lifetime, was giving place to the new. Perhaps this period may most fitly be closed by the words spoken by the new colleague, as he looked back on those days when he was first associated with Dr. Mac Gregor:

'Exactly ten years after he began his work here, I entered on my ministry among you, in which he and I were to be fellow-workers for over a quarter of a century. During that long period of collegiate service, much was accomplished in the outward equipment of church and parish, much also in missionary and spiritual development. Great undertakings in church-building and church extension had to be carried through. Difficulties of all kinds were encountered. But as I look back I can see that a main factor in overcoming obstacles was the cheery, dauntless humanity of my venerable colleague, his ever ready wit and humour, his confident conviction that in all we undertook we were furthering God's cause. More than any man I have known he made all his efforts and difficulties the subject of prayer. And this was the reason why, in spite of much natural impulsiveness and what men called his Celtic impetuosity, he often surprised even those who knew him best by a calmness and serenity for which they were not prepared.'

CHAPTER XIV

CHURCH AND STATE

1885-1891

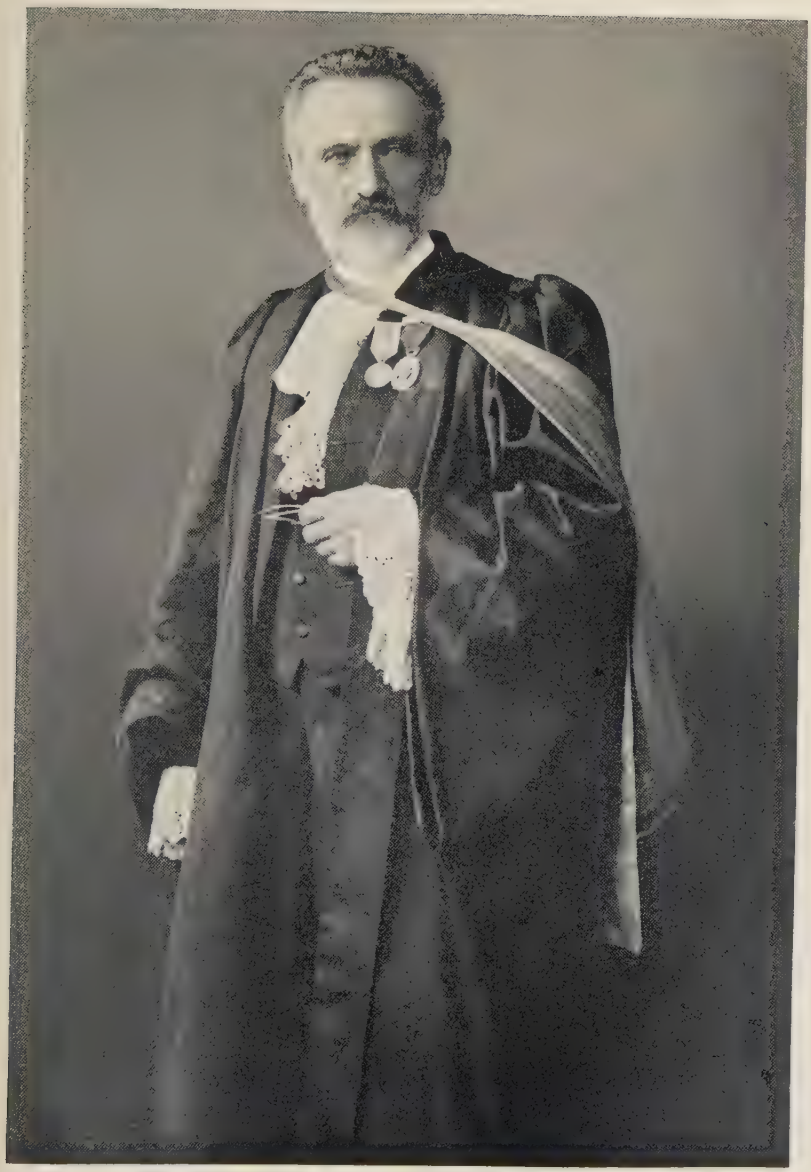
'Nec tamen consumebatur.'
'Nemo me impune lacessit.'

'And the might of the Gentile unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord.'

SOME general review of Dr. Mac Gregor's work in Church Defence must be given. His diary and letters have shown that he, in common with all who cared for the history and position of the National Church, knew that, with the return of a Liberal majority in 1880, the time of her security was at an end.

Mr. Gladstone required all the forces he could muster, and his need for a large Parliamentary majority grew as the design of giving Home Rule to Ireland took root in his mind. He had none of the instinctive feeling concerning the trend of popular feeling in Scotland that he had for England. He trusted the information he received, and he drew it from the very narrowest sources. The organised Radicals in Scotland, at that date, were mostly Liberationist in Church matters, and that party within the Free Church was led by one who was Mr. Gladstone's equal in astute political intrigue.

The Duke of Argyll used to say that Mr. Gladstone's outlook on Scottish Ecclesiastical affairs was entirely with the small body of Episcopalians. His personal interest in the question of the Disestablishment of the Scottish Church was very slight, and what he had consisted entirely in the hope that 'religious equality' would help the sect whose



THE RIGHT REV. THE MODERATOR, D.D. 1891

tenets he understood, and whose place in Scottish history was not repugnant to his essentially Tory mind.

Ireland, and the Irish party in Parliament, occupied the thoughts of the Prime Minister. Had he not been desirous of gathering into his party every Liberal force that would help him to a large majority, the question of disestablishing the Scottish Church might never have been touched by him.

The General Assembly had watched the course of events, and though at first the Church had more or less acted in that spirit of quietness and confidence the Duke had recommended to Dr. Mac Gregor, it had begun to feel that some step must be taken against the growing assertiveness of the Disestablishment party. The General Assembly of 1882 appointed a Committee 'to watch any questions or measures affecting the interests of the Church,' and that Committee was to have a long and splendid history in 'Church Defence.'

A few months later a Church Defence Association was formed, and its work of distributing literature and organising meetings was soon in active operation.

As the prospects of a General Election under the new Franchise Bill approached, the campaign on the part of the Disestablishers was pressed more closely, and Mr. Dick Peddie introduced into Parliament his Bill for disestablishing the Scottish Church. It met with the fate of many a better private member's Bill. The attempt served a purpose for the Church. The House of Commons was snowballed with petitions against Disestablishment. Nearly three quarters of a million of persons of legal age signed against the Bill, while those in its favour could only muster two thousand names. Dick Peddie was a danger-signal, and Mr. Gladstone arrived in Scotland knowing that those who had informed him that 'the immense majority of the people of Scotland were in favour of Disestablishment,' had given him, in Parliamentary language, 'inaccurate information.'

He came to Midlothian in November, and made his declaration on the Church question from the Free Assembly

Hall, an ominous site; but on this occasion the Free Church found they had admitted to their hall a Balaam. He did not bless the Church of Scotland, but he used language which showed he was not going to lead in the movement for Disestablishment. Principal Rainy and the leaders of the Free Church were bitterly disappointed with Mr. Gladstone's pronouncement. It was a most characteristic speech, full of reserves and possibilities, but the key-note lay in the words, 'I am labouring with all my might for the unity of the Liberal party,' and he proceeded to say that subjects must not be taken out of their due order. Dr. Mac Gregor's comments in his diary were as short as the speech had been long:

9th November 1885.—'Great Church Defence meeting in the Music Hall, Edinburgh. Lord Napier of Ettrick in the Chair. Overflow meeting in St. Andrew's Church quite full; the Freemasons' Hall full also. I spoke for forty-five minutes in the Music Hall.

'Went to Aberdeen. Busy all the way. Stayed with Mitford Mitchell. Church Defence meeting in East Church. Overflow meeting in West Church. Spoke for fifty minutes —an hour in the West Church. Left Aberdeen with James A. Campbell. Very tired but in great health. Gladstone in the Free Assembly Hall. The Church is saved! Gracias a Dios.'

There were many Liberals, both in the Free Church and in the Church of Scotland, who thought that if Disestablishment was to come it should be put fairly before the people as a separate issue, and not mixed up with the questions of Home Rule and a party majority in favour of Ireland's claims. In this way there began, before the election of 1885, on the part of Church Liberals, a separation from their party. It was a defection the Liberal Whips could not but be aware of, and the warning that his followers were falling off in and out of Parliament was one Gladstone never disregarded.

Dr. Mac Gregor had not been a member of the General Assembly of 1885. He had been ordered to Spain for his health, or he would have been one of those thrilled to the

heart of his patriotic being on that memorable occasion. The members had met after months of anxiously watching the manœuvres of the political parties. Again and again they had known that the National Church was being used as a pawn in the game, her safety or her fall played with as the Liberal party hoped to gain or lose by putting her existence into the market of the lobby and the hustings. No one knew what would happen, and though the leaders had organised their forces, they were still uncertain whether it were best to abide in their tents, or draw out in battle array.

None of those who took part in that great scene will ever forget the crowded Assembly, the anxious questions and suggestions, the knowledge of the hopes and intrigues of the Assembly 'over the way.' Then came the noble figure of Tulloch standing at the table. His simple statement of what a National Church meant in the religious life of the State, the retelling of the old principles on which the Scottish Church and State were founded. 'We must stand somewhere—we stand *here*.' As through the tense silence rang the calm, determined voice, the electric thrill brought every man to his feet, and the air rang with the shout of those who were ready for 'Defence,' and who would recognise no retreat.

The Assembly broke up, each minister and elder to his post, not to meet again till the first assault on the Church had ended in the repulse of the attack, and the cleavage in the Liberal ranks had begun which was to widen and carry away into the Unionist ranks the flower of Scottish Church Liberalism.

Dr. Mac Gregor had formulated his own convictions, and his view of Church and State, in the St. Giles Lectures. They were criticised at the time as 'political,' but for that he did not care. The Nation's good to him was the Nation's outward and visible sign of obedience to the claims of the spiritual life. For the State to turn its back on religion was not 'politics,' but the assertion of 'atheism.' In such a frame of mind, Church Defence was part of the Gospel he was set to preach, and to try to deter him was but

the device of the Enemy. In his public life, at this period, he received plenty of severe criticism. He was always completely indifferent to these attacks. He cut the articles out of newspapers, pasted them neatly into little books of his own manufacturing, sometimes underlining some specially spicy titles such as 'Boanerges,' or a 'State-paid Parson.' Then, laying them aside, he forgot they had ever been written. Letters of personal attack, if signed, were always acknowledged as having been read, and they also went into the file of the year. His methods at public meetings were universally successful. He treated 'the shrieks' of his opponents with good-natured badinage, and he got the attention and good humour of his audience by endless illustrative stories, which set them roaring with laughter.

He led them by swift transitions of thought and voice into the more arid regions of his subject, but the history of 'his dearly beloved land' and her Church could never be dryasdust to him. They lived and glowed with all the fervent belief that was in him. A young student, who was present in Aberdeen at a crowded Church Defence meeting, still remembers in later life how dull all the speakers seemed, and how lifeless the audience, till to him the unknown figure of the Doctor came forward on the platform and began to speak. 'In a very short time,' he said, 'we all felt we would go out with him, and follow him anywhere, and do anything he told us.'

A. K. H. B. describes this 'defender of the Faith':

'Once at a gathering of three thousand people at Aberdeen, I saw and heard Mac Gregor cause wild enthusiasm by simple means. "There was a day," he said, "on which an ancestor of mine was sentenced to be hanged." Loud applause greeted this tragic statement. The orator went on, "I have no doubt it was for stealing." Considering the way in which the Mac Gregors of old got their living, the suggestion was a very probable one. It was received with thunderous cheering. Then, "But as he was a distinguished thief, he was allowed to select the tree on which he was to be executed; and, with great presence of mind, he selected

a gooseberry-bush. It was at once objected that it was not big enough. But he said, with dignity, '*Let it grow! I'm in no hurry.*'" The multitude appeared frantic with delight, and then Mac Gregor went on to moralise. To have an ancestor hanged five or six centuries back is respectable, even dignified, but it must not be too near. Curious ideas get abroad. Two days after I received a letter from a dear friend of the orator's and mine, in which the passage occurred, "What is this I hear about Mac Gregor's grandfather being hanged?"

'On November 17th we had a great Church Defence meeting in the Town Hall. It was crammed to excess. Sir Alexander Kinloch, Sir Robert Anstruther, and several others, spoke well. But the outstanding and unforgettable speech was Dr. Mac Gregor's. Both he and Sir Alexander were nervous and silent beforehand. But in a minute after Mac Gregor got upon his feet you felt the orator was at home, and he played on that dense mass, whether to move to howls of laughter or to silent tears. He went on for an hour, and he could quite easily have gone on for two. He held his argument well in hand, and never lost sight of it. The profusion of stories and quaint illustrations passed belief. The enthusiasm was tremendous. One could quite understand that people would fight for the Kirk if need were. Specially from a mass of students in one corner came vehement applause of the old St. Andrews student now set on high. Mac Gregor saw them, and turning to them, "Ah! you dear young men, how my heart warms to you! It seems yesterday since I was one of you. Just to hear your voices and look at you makes me young again!" If they applauded before, they became like yelling maniacs now, and so abode till the end. But the most effective thing of all was a simple story. The story of the man with the red garibaldi, who mistook the bull's meaning when pawing the ground on the other side of the hedge, and said, "None of your apologies, you brute; you meant it!"

'Whatever any one may think of this story, it awakened frantic enthusiasm when orally delivered. Many started to their feet, and the thunderous applause stopped the speaker for five minutes at least. It rose again and again, Mac Gregor meanwhile standing with blazing eyes and outstretched hand. Not even at Aberdeen, when he told of the

merited hanging of his progenitor, was the popular emotion so stirred.

'Immediately after concluding his speech, the orator departed from the hall with the avowed purpose of going straight to bed, but the steam had been got up far too much for that. He talked vehemently till an early hour.'

The beliefs which inspired his efforts he has left in permanent shape. A few of the sentences may be quoted here. They still ring with all the freshness of sincerity, as they sounded through the innumerable meetings he addressed in these strenuous years.

'If you destroy the Church, you destroy our most ancient, our most characteristic, and our stateliest institution, which, more than all other forces put together, has made our country what it is.

'Disestablishment means much more, and much worse than the denationalising of the Church and State; it means the dechristianising of the State. It means the destruction of National religion, and the dethronement of the Lord Jesus Christ as King and Head of this land.

'Every future Sovereign of this realm would be relieved from the oath by which, through all these years, our rulers have been bound to uphold the Protestant Faith. Our Voluntary brethren have plainly spoken out their mind from their point of view. We must do the same from ours.

'We hold it as a fundamental, essential, and everlasting principle, that it is the right and duty of nations in *their national capacity* to honour Almighty God and His Son Jesus Christ, and to the utmost of their power to support, defend, and further His cause and Kingdom on the earth.

'That is the great principle on which we take our stand, and from which we cannot swerve. We should hold it as firmly, and proclaim it as fully, as we now do if we were disestablished to-morrow; and should work and pray for the time when it would be reasserted in this land. It was a principle strongly and even passionately held by our great Reformers, and has come down to us unchallenged until quite recent years.'

He goes on to say:

'There is no *via media*, no resting-place between the conception of the State as sceptic, and the conception of the

State as, in some form or other, allied with religion and a Church, which is simply religion embodied and organised. However many turns you may take, and however much ingenuity you may expend, the Voluntary principle, carried to its logical issue, leads straight up to this, that the State as a State knows no God and no religion, has no religious character and no religious responsibility.

'Such is the light in which, at a grave crisis, we look at this grave question. On what we conceive to be the strong and sure ground of National religion, and of a Christian State, by the help of God, we take our stand. Our Bibles, as we read them, and as our fathers read them before us, our history, our principles, the memory of our mighty dead, forbid us to consent to an act of Disestablishment.'

With these principles to defend, it is no wonder that he entered into the fray with fearless courage. And the time was full of encouragement. Day after day, through the election campaign, old Liberals deserted the ranks of the party, and made common cause for the Church of their fathers. Mr. Finlay stood as a Liberal Churchman for the Inverness burghs against Mr. Walter Maclaren, a Liberal, who supported Disestablishment. Mr. Finlay won the seat by the aid of Liberal Churchmen, who were not all of them of the 'Established' Church. The Free Church of that date was filled with those who were 'Constitutionalists,' and were not Voluntaries. Mr. Finlay's promise to introduce a Bill dealing with the Church question belongs to a later period, but Inverness had the aid of the Doctor in the fight between the two Liberal candidates, on the question of a National Church. He took part in another closely contested election. Sir Robert Anstruther, candidate for the St. Andrews burghs, wrote to him:

'Would it be possible for you to come next Sunday and preach to our Cellardyke fishermen? to keep their hearts warm and their heads strong to defend the Kirk? Half of them are thorough Churchmen, but the rest are lukewarm.

'We must impress upon Mr. Gladstone and the public that the Church of Scotland is strong in the hearts of our people, and is to be maintained and not destroyed.'

Dr. Mac Gregor promptly answered the call; he preferred to seek the good of the Nation's life from the pulpit rather than the platform. He would not stay with the Conservative candidate. His own account of the Sunday was 'preached on Trust in God—Disestablishment.'

The sermon most strongly impressed the congregation. A large body of fishermen were among his hearers, and were 'deeply excited.' The poll was next day, and the election ended in a tie between the two members. Mr. Williamson was a vehement disestablisher, and was supported by that party. The Radical press was highly indignant, and the Doctor had many columns filled with epithets devoted to his personality. The Conservative press wrote: 'Dr. Mac Gregor appeared on the scene and bore a hand in the fray. He selected his text from Malachi iii. 8, "Would a man rob God?" And he smote the robbers "hip and thigh."'

The Doctor's diary merely says, 'With all my journeyings and work I am free of cold and in great force. I have never been so busy in all my life before, and the Divine promise has been fulfilled for me—"As thy day is, so shall thy strength be."'

Work of this kind was a better tonic than all the breezes of the Baltic, or the soft airs of southern Spain. His colleagues, lay and ecclesiastic, were working beside him. Never did the Church benefit more from her organisation and the members of her Church courts. Possibly 'Church Defence' had not begun soon enough, but if the campaign against the Church found her somewhat unprepared, when the roll-call of her defenders was taken they were found in the public men who had their place in her courts, and also in both Houses of Parliament. It was the work of some to organise meetings and to provide 'Defence' literature. Tulloch, reviewing the circumstances, says: 'We have to bear in mind that politicians in these days are men busy and sometimes up to the ears in work. The old idea is, I am afraid, no longer well founded, that all who seek to guide public opinion and legislation look carefully for

themselves into questions of this kind and the statements made to them. The fact is, there is no class of men in the country, according to my experience, more dependent on the information communicated to them than our current politicians. It is quite common for them to be "crammed" on special subjects, and to derive almost all their information from the "cram" thus administered to them.'

It was the work of the Defence Committee and the Association for Defence to open the eyes of public men and the laity to the priceless possession they had in the National Church. More than half the Liberal members and candidates, owing to the process of idly 'cramming,' had allowed themselves to be claimed by what was proved to be the minority of the people in Scotland.

Dr. Mac Gregor was in all the deliberations of the Church both private and public. No man could keep his counsel better. With all his unreserve of manner he could be trusted never to tell what was not good for the public ear. 'I do abominate the person, man or woman, who cannot keep a secret,' was a saying of his, and he had many confided to him.

There were plenty to defend the Church at head-quarters. His special work was in moving through the country, and using his great gifts as a speaker in arresting and enchaining popular interest.

At a later date, when the Church was again assailed, the Rev. Archibald Fleming wrote to him: 'I can't help wishing that your colleague were at home, and you were "let loose" on Scotland. It would set the country on fire.'

The heather did blaze wherever 'the Mac Gregor' set foot. He imparted his fire to every audience he addressed. It was part of himself to become possessed with the subject in which he was engrossed. On his return from Canada he was an inspired prophet on the somewhat dreary statistics of emigration and settlement in a new land. He breathed on its rigid climate, and the snows of its long winter were thawed in the genial temperature of his imagination. Canada appeared on every platform, and the 'maple leaf'

was pressed between every page of his sermons. The new affection sent him, to the dismay and discomfiture of the adversary, through the length and breadth of Scotland.

It was the people who saved the Church of Scotland. Seat after seat was won by the feeling for the Church. Dick Peddie fell in the Kilmarnock burghs, the Inverness burghs returned Mr. Finlay, and the discomfited Liberal organisers assured the Liberal whips that the cause of the cleavage was not the opposition to Home Rule. These elections were portents from Scotland to the Liberal Government, which was steadily marching to a final defeat.

Dr. Mac Gregor had fought through the campaign with a zeal which burnt and yet was never consumed. Very thankfully he saw that the victory was won, and he returned to his ordinary work, and the absorbing interest of his pulpit. Controversy, especially ecclesiastical controversy, was an atmosphere in which he never felt in his element. Church courts he had always shunned, and possibly neglected. If he had to be a member, he regretfully recorded the days spent in them as 'lost.'

There were many reasons for this rather unusual distaste in one who, when he had to 'meet sinners in the way,' was so well equipped for warfare, and who conducted it with such successful enthusiasm. For one thing, he had never any personal grudge against the other Christian communities, who, in his view, had not departed in faith or works from the Catholic verities.

The iron of the Disruption had never entered into his soul, and he shared in none of the bitter controversies of his age, probably, because his personal affections had brought him into close contact with Presbyterians outside the Church of Scotland.

Through all his 'Defence,' he looked to a union of the Churches as the truest and happiest solution of the question. It ran through all his speeches, and at one time his sanguine temperament eagerly grasped the possibility of a union with the Scottish Episcopalians. One of that community wrote to him in 1879: 'Your efforts for unity are watched even

by us. Please God the time will come when all our unhappy divisions may be healed, and unity restored to Scotland on the wider basis of Catholic Christianity.'

Unchristian and sectarian bitterness and reviling his spirit abhorred. It led to deeds and words unworthy the Church Catholic and Apostolic, and his practical common sense resented the wasting blight of schism, and the overlapping which rival Church organisations must always create.

His wide friendships, both among the dignitaries of the Church of England and with some of the leaders of the Free Church in Scotland, made him feel that 'fellowship in Christ' was the one thing needful, and to be sought for as the greatest blessing his country could desire.

He wrote to Her Majesty an outpouring of all he had seen and felt and hoped yet to see. The Queen answered with her own hand:

'OSBORNE, *Jan.* 3, 1886.

'Your kind letter has *touched* me *deeply*. You *understand* what *my* feelings are, and I thank you for it, from my heart.

'May God bless you in this New Year, and our beloved Scotland, is the sincere wish of yours truly,

'V.R.I.'

When the Abolition of Patronage had become the law of the Church, he had looked for union. In the negotiations with the Free Church at that time, he believed Principal Rainy had raised hopes in the Church of Scotland which he had finally disappointed. These negotiations Dr. Mac Gregor rarely referred to, and when he did it was obvious that he felt the Church had not been treated with truth and sincerity. But disappointments did not affect his sanguine hopes for the next occasion. He never trusted men whom he had once found unworthy of confidence, and Mr. Gladstone had never been one of those on whom he had relied.

Among Scottish Presbyterians there were many sincere and convinced Liberationists, though inside Parliament there were very few who treated the question of a National Church

on its merits, and not as an asset in the Parliamentary game. Against the machinations and intrigues of party, Dr. Mac Gregor and the statesmen of the Church felt there was but one defence, the voice of the people of Scotland, in determining the question of what should be done with that which was their own possession. That voice had given no uncertain sound in the general election, and was to be heard again in 1886 and in 1892.

The Church was not content with the mere opposition to Disestablishment. The Rev. James Robertson of Whittinghame wrote to him on the work before the Defence Associations in the country:

'*January* 1886.

'I think I ought to write that you may feel assured of the interest, sympathy, and hope with which ministers in our own Church are observing what you have lately said on the Church question, and the response it has met with. It is worth while going through the chaos of an election, when everything seems for a time reduced to fluidity, to find that in this way a thing so manifestly called for as Reconstruction of our Scottish Church begins to appear possible. The present state of matters is intolerable.

'What delights me is your sincerity in urging union, and the success your appeals have met with. This is strong because it is right, but also it is our only *policy*. We cannot take a mere stand of defence: we must have some real proposal instead of Disestablishment. It must be one that meets the only weakness of our position, that these other Churches, or their members, have an equal right with ourselves to the inherited privileges.

'The people of the country are sensitive to *justice*; if we are in thorough sincerity seeking to do what this requires, the whole force of the argument and sentiment will be on our side.

'You are right, I believe, in calling on the laymen to settle it. If we create Church Defence Associations everywhere, they will be a great influence in this direction. I believe a representation from them could be quickly got, or will come of itself, which would carry an Assembly, of necessity, with it.

'But what a hope it is! How proud we should all be

of one another if we were one again! And not until quite recently did I hope to see it.

'The great thing is to get people to look in the right direction, to get them familiar with the idea and word "Reconstruction" (as, indeed, you have already done)—this is the first great thing.'

Mr. Finlay had written:

'*Nov.* 12, 1885.

'If I should be returned to Parliament, it is my intention to make a serious effort to have the barriers between the Established and Free Church removed by legislation, and I was delighted to see that any such attempt would have your powerful support.

'I have been in frequent communication with the venerable Dr. Mackay here, the undoubted head of the constitutional party in the Free Church, and he assures me that my views as to what should be done are identical with his own.'

On his election Mr. Finlay had at once made good his promise, and early in 1886 Dr. Mac Gregor says, 'Called on T. G. Murray about R. B. Finlay's Bill.'

The Duke had resigned office in Mr. Gladstone's ministry in 1881. He was in the councils of those who were defending the position of the Church, but of necessity took no active part till the elections of 1885 were over. He was not an advocate for the creation of a 'Secretary for Scotland,' and wrote to the Doctor while that policy was under discussion:

'*Jan.* 1884.

'So you have been Home Ruling! Well, if Scotland demands that one member of the Cabinet shall always be a Scotsman, I suppose Ireland will demand the same. This would be entirely new, and most mischievous.'

'GOUROCK, *Jan.* 9, 1886.

'DEAR DUKE OF ARGYLL,—The accompanying important communication has just reached me, and I lose not a moment in forwarding it. The writer is the agent for the Church, and is a clear-headed man of business. He has been in close communication with Mr. Finlay, and assured me some time ago that some influential elders of Free St. George's had spoken to him of their desire for union.

'You have achieved good and great work for your country, like your father before you, but there has never come to you, in the providence of God, the opportunity of doing a greater and more blessed service to your country than that pointed out in this communication. There is no man in Scotland more familiar with the subject than you are. There is no man who, on historical and personal grounds, is more entitled to deal with it; and there is no man who, to an equal extent, or to anything like the extent, commands the respect of all parties. These are plain facts, all pointing to your Grace as the man who, of all others, is most competent to undertake this delicate task. I believe that all eyes are at this moment turned towards you. I know that there is a deep and widespread craving for union all over the country at this moment, and I believe in God that if you put your hand to this work you will be able to accomplish and render the greatest service to your country that was ever done by the House of Argyll.

'I know, too, that you will be followed and upheld by the earnest and imploring prayers of thousands and thousands of loyal hearts.

'You will, I know, forgive the urgency with which I plead with you to give this matter your favourable consideration. —Yours truly, 'JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

The Duke replied:

'INVERARAY, *Jan.* 1886.

'I can't leave here, but I can *write* intimating my cordial assent to Finlay's Bill, or any Bill drawn on some such lines "on its behalf."'

'The Duke consents to speak. Hurrah!' is the entry in the diary of this date.

'*Jan.* 12, 1886.

'MY DEAR MR. FINLAY,—Your Bill goes on apace. It has touched a strong chord in all true Scottish hearts, which I have long known to be there, but which only an outsider like yourself could strike with power.

'As I told you, whatever comes of it, it will make you "immortal."

'You have in the providence of God done the right thing, and you must "haud at it," in spite of all discouragements, till the thing is done.

'Acting on my own suggestion, I am keeping out of the way and saying nothing. I am no ecclesiastic, and all my life long abominating ecclesiastic assemblies, I can look at the whole thing from a plain, common-sense view; and I clearly perceive that the obstacles in the way will come *from the ministers.*

'The laity want it as earnestly as we do. Christian common sense and good feeling and knowledge of the world would make the matter wonderfully simple.

'I send you a copy of a letter from Sheriff Thoms, which seems to me a haver. The less said about "Claims of Right" the better.

'The Duke is the one man in Scotland best fitted for the work of conciliation. I wrote to him on receipt of his letter, telling him to put his thoughts in words. Again and again I feel it is "now or never," and again and again I say—"God bless and support you." You have taken a mighty task on your shoulders. May He give you strength to bear it. Thousands and thousands of warm hearts are praying for you and for this great work.

'I write as a weary, much-labouring man to a much-labouring but *strong* man.—Yours truly,

'JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

The aim of 'the Finlay Bill' is best told in the correspondence which passed between Mr. Finlay and the Duke and Dr. Mac Gregor. It was a Declaratory Bill, and dealt with many of the questions which had been in dispute during the Disruption.

The Free Church opposed it throughout, on the ground that it was not a Bill to unite the Churches, but one to enable individuals with a clear conscience to return to the Established Church. The Liberationists would look with favour on no Bill which had for its purpose the strengthening and not the destruction of the Church.

In Parliament the Bill was supported by the Conservative whips, and fearing greatly, the Free Church sent Principal Rainy to London to work against it in the lobby. Mr. Trevelyan opposed the Bill as Secretary for Scotland, and it was thrown out by a small majority. Principal Rainy's biographer says: 'In order to defeat the Bill, the Irish

Nationalists had to be called in to overbalance the votes of the English Conservatives.'

The Finlay Bill excited great interest in and out of Parliament. Meetings were held and petitions were signed, and the Press devoted much space to the question.

Dr. Mac Gregor's high hopes and active exertions in its behalf were destined to failure, but the Bill was another landmark in the story of Church Interest and Defence.

Mr. Cameron, who moved its rejection, did not dare to put it in the form of an amendment for Disestablishment. It was the first Parliamentary step since the Abolition of Patronage in 1874 with the object of reunion. The first Bill to recognise the errors of the Parliament of the past, and the first of a series of overtures to the Churches which have gone forth from the National Zion.

From the Duke of Argyll:

'*Dec.* 30, 1885.

'The drift and object of the Draft Bill I quite approve of. But I have serious objections to its form, due to the following considerations:

'*First.*—It is quite possible that no Bill can be passed. There will be a combination against every conceivable Bill. The dissenting interest will certainly be opposed, and as long as Gladstone lives he will be a determined enemy.

'*Second.*—Therefore we must take great care that we don't damage fatally our own position, in the event of our attempt at legislation failing.

'*Third.*—This damage would certainly arise if the Free Church leaders could say: "See there! the Established Church has *confessed* that she is in bonds, that she is not 'free.' She has gone to Parliament to try to get them struck off, *and has failed.* By her own confession, therefore, she is a Church *not* enjoying the freedom which is essential to any Church, and especially to her under her own standards."

'*Fourth.*—In order to avoid exposing ourselves to this reproach, we must make it quite clear that we *assert* and maintain that the Church is *now* in the full enjoyment of all necessary freedom, and that it is *only* to satisfy the scruples of others that we wish to have a fresh legislative acknowledgment of our old constitutional freedom.

'*Fifth.*—This can only be attained by giving the Bill a

purely declaratory form, and by reciting the old Acts as still alive and in full force.

'*Sixth.*—The form of the Bill is declaratory in *a way*. It does not, however, even allude to, far less quote, or refer to, the old Constitutional Statutes of 1567-1592-1690, and the Treaty of Union.

'Therefore: the Bill ought, in my opinion, to begin by setting forth the old statutes, and by declaring that they are in full force and effect. It should refer to the Act of Patronage as repealed, and then proceed to the clause dealing with the power of erecting new parishes, or admitting new members to Assemblies.

'Recollect that it will greatly *facilitate* the passing of any Bill if, on the face of it, it proposes to be little more than a mere re-enactment of old Constitutional Statutes which include one of the Revolution Settlement and the Treaty of Union. "Spiritual independence" startles many Englishmen, and it is best that we should keep to our old words and laws as far as we can.'

On this, Mr. Finlay wrote to Dr. Mac Gregor:

'*Jan.* 7, 1886.

'What occurs to me on reading the Duke's letter, which forms a most valuable contribution to the discussion, is as follows:

'1. I quite agree that there will be furious opposition from the Liberationists. In fact, if union were achieved they would have to shut up shop altogether, so that the Liberation Society will be fighting for existence. If the Bill on examination is thought worthy of support, I trust that it will be so supported by public meetings and speeches all over Scotland that the active resistance of the Liberationists and *vis inertiæ* of the House of Commons on such a matter as spiritual independence may be overcome.

'The laity must take the matter up, as you have said more than once, and we must remember that if the thing is not done now it will never be done at all.

'2 and 3. I don't think that the Established Church could damage her own position by supporting such a measure. The deliverances of the Church courts might set out that the Church claimed, and had for all practical purposes at all events, spiritual independence, but that they looked with favour on this measure as tending to remove the doubts and

apprehensions which, until so dispelled, will for ever keep the Free Church apart from the Establishment.

'That nearly the whole population of the Highlands will make such a measure a *sine qua non* is certain. How could it fairly be said that by favouring it for *this reason* the Church confessed she was in bonds? It may be said, and will probably be said by people who are ready to say anything, but I don't think it will produce any effect on the public mind.

'4. This should certainly be clearly asserted in any deliverance of the Church courts in favour of the Bill, and it will be observed that the Bill is *declaratory*.

'5. The Bill is already declaratory. What is wanted is to brush away the dust which certain decisions of the Court of Session about 1842 have laid on the old statutes.

'The only two decisions of the Court of Session have fallen with the repeal of the statute of Anne, so happily affected by the Act of 1874. These decisions were not taken to the Lords, and seem to me to be erroneous, and what the Highlanders insist on is just a declaration by the Legislature that they are not law.

'To recite the old statutes would weigh down the Bill very much and greatly increase its length. The shorter it is the more chance it has of getting through. Moreover, as these statutes are unimpeached and in form, why put in a section to say that they are in form? To do this would indeed lay the Church open to the observation that she must have some doubt on the point.

'There are no two opinions as to these old statutes being in force! There are no two opinions as to the present effect on the Church of the construction put on them by the Court of Session.

'You will see that the Bill appears in the newspapers. I have been advised on all hands, and by some very high authorities, that this course should be adopted. Both political parties will of course notice what reception it meets with from the people of Scotland. If the people press the matter with sufficient vigour the Bill may be taken up and passed: publication gives politicians the necessary opportunity of seeing how the cat is going to jump.'

'*Jan.* 14, 1886.

'DEAR DR. MAC GREGOR,—I see the Duke has kept his promise to you of writing. His letter, which is in the

Scotsman of yesterday, will do a world of good, and strikes the true note. To mention the Claim of Rights, as Sheriff Thoms suggests, would be fatal. It is admirably put as a claim, but could not be enacted with the recitals. The Bill gives the claim, which is all that is wanted.

'One can't but be touched by Dr. Wordsworth's feeling, but we must be prudent, and a single word, either from you or any one else concerned in this movement, showing a desire for union with the Episcopalians would send the whole Free Church, especially in the north, laymen and all, into space.

'I have read what Dr. Wordsworth has written about union. I admire the man immensely, and have heard him preach with great pleasure, but on this point he does not look at the hard facts of the case.

'Union with those who hold his views about *Episcopal* succession (I don't say Apostolical succession, for of course Presbyterians may believe in that) is for Presbyterians absolutely impossible.

'We have enough to do with the Free Church just now, who are so near—if the problem is complicated with Episcopalians the whole scheme may at once be consigned to the *limbo* appropriated to devout imaginations.—Yours ever,

'R. B. FINLAY.'

Dr. Mac Gregor's 'vision,' of a Church United and Catholic, needed the gentle warning of the member who was to deal with the matter. He turned his energies to promoting a large meeting to support the Bill, and was urgent that the Duke should come and address it.

'*March* 4, 1886.

'I suppose the chief aim will be to *trot out* the Free Church ministers, and others who are favourable. In which case I don't know that I ought to make any long opening speech myself.

'If we had some strong and decided speeches from Free Church men it would be an advantage. ARGYLL.'

Dr. Mac Gregor telegraphed: 'They are fully counting on you as principal speaker. You cannot speak too long.'

'*March* 6, 1886.

'MY DEAR DR. MAC GREGOR,—Your information is useful. But I want to know more, because the pilotage in these

waters is a delicate matter. How far will it be safe for me to criticise Rainy's speeches? They are aimed against us, and we ought to be free to speak against them.

'I suppose all there will be anti-Rainyites! His speeches are open to effective reply, though I may not have time or space to answer them as they deserve. ARGYLL.'

From diary:

'*March* 6.—All this week occupied with Finlay's Bill. On Sunday had enormous congregation. Lord Young present.

'*March* 12.—Magnificent meeting for Finlay Bill. The Duke wrote me on the 10th: "Inveraray.—I am down with the gout, quite helpless to-day. I fear I have no chance. The weather is so bitter. I am greatly vexed. I had much to say, and should have enjoyed saying it."

'*March* 13.—Sent off Petition in favour of Finlay Bill with 5251 signatures from St. Cuthberts.'

On the 20th he heard from Sir Robert Anstruther:

'You will be sorry to see that Mr. Finlay's Bill was lost on Wednesday, but only by 23. The speech that he made in moving the second reading was one after your own heart, and worthy of the subject. Do you think it is possible for us, as a Church, to commence any negotiations with other Presbyterian bodies in Scotland at once, on the faith of some such enabling Bill becoming law before long?'

When the Free Assembly met, a debate was held on the Finlay Bill, and Principal Rainy again carried that House in a strong vote for Disestablishment.

In the midst of these discussions the Doctor learned that Her Majesty had been pleased to appoint him one of Her chaplains, in the room of the late Principal Tulloch.

It was an honour which gratified him deeply. His respect for Queen Victoria had grown with the years in which he had been admitted to a confidence and friendship which knew neither place nor degree. He understood how deeply the Queen had felt the loss of the Principal, and that he should have been at once chosen to stand in his place showed him that Her Majesty trusted him, and knew his veneration for the throne and her person. He wrote at once to the Queen:

'*March* 22, 1886.

'MADAM,—The distinction which Your Majesty has been pleased to confer upon me in appointing me to the chaplaincy, rendered vacant by the lamented death of Principal Tulloch, has filled me with the deepest and most heart-felt gratitude. It is a distinction which I greatly prize as the last and highest of many favours which I have received at Your Majesty's hands through what is now getting on to be a long period of years. Strangely enough, the intimation came to me on the anniversary of the day on which my home was emptied, and vividly recalled to me how greatly I was helped through that dark time by your tender and generous sympathy. That sympathy I can never forget. It has added intensity to my devotion to Your Majesty's person, and warmth and fervour to my prayers, which will never cease to rise for you, that through all the lonely hours of your lonely life, and through all the anxieties of the most troubled and perplexing time which ever fell to the lot of an English Sovereign, God may guide, sustain, and bless you. —I am, Madam, Your Majesty's devoted servant,

'JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

When he went to Balmoral for his autumn duty, he says:

'My first residence as chaplain. In my room a picture of Tulloch. Dined with Her Majesty. Much laughing with Miss Phipps. Could not sleep because of the ticking of the big clock in the tower over my head.

'At three had an interview with the Queen. Talk of the new church at Crathie, ready for the Queen's jubilee. I left for Birkhall, where H.R.H. Duchess of Albany was staying. The little Duke, Charles Edward, and the dear little Princess Alice, found great pleasure in sifting the things in my pockets. In the evening read the *Passing of Arthur*.'

'You now enjoy the great privilege of possessing a stall, without fodder, in St. Giles,' wrote Dr. Cameron Lees, 'which I hope you will from time to time grace with your presence. Alas, for Finlay's Bill! How strange that the Free Church should be found opposing the granting of the Claim of Right. Surely such immorality will bring its appropriate punishment with it.'

The Dean of Windsor wrote:

'I never doubted it would be so, and some three weeks ago I knew the Queen had settled it, but she bid me say nothing till it was officially announced. I am glad there should be this official cementing of the link which has connected you so long with the honoured Lady whom we serve. —Ever affectionately yours, RANDALL T. DAVIDSON.'

'I wrote to the Queen thanking her for the letters regarding the expulsion of Prince Alexander from Bulgaria.'

Near the end of 1886 he was again involved in a Church controversy, which came from his eager desire for 'union' in the practical work of all the Churches.

Bishop Wordsworth of St. Andrews was sincerely desirous of approaching the National Church in a spirit of looking at the things on which there need be no division, rather than accentuating the matters which divided the sect he represented in Scotland. 'Church Union: steps to promote it,' was the title of a charge which he delivered at the Diocesan Synod, held in Perth the year following the controversy now to be related.

Bishop Wordsworth was requested by the Y.M.C.A. in St. Cuthberts to deliver one of a course of lectures on a week day in the church. To Dr. Mac Gregor the Bishop wrote:

'You and your young men have done me a great honour in making the request. It remains to be seen whether our Heavenly Father will so far prosper the design as to continue to give to me (now at the age of Barzillai) sufficient health and strength to enable me to perform the duty you propose. If He shall so far extend His mercy to an old servant, I shall hope to do it to the best of the power which He may give me.'

Near the appointed date the Bishop wrote:

'It is with sincere regret that I sit down to write this letter. When in May last I acceded to the request of your Young Men's Christian Association—a request so kindly conveyed and reinforced by you—that I would deliver one of the lectures in their usual winter course, our Episcopal See of Edinburgh was vacant, and I acted simply on my own sense of duty suggested by the circumstances. But as

soon as the See was filled, I felt it would be due and proper to communicate to the new Bishop what I had done, with the expression of a hope that he would be able to concur in my proposed step, or at least that it *need* not elicit his *disapproval*; for *in that case*, of course, my lecture would not be delivered, and I must request you to release me from my engagement.

'The Bishop has taken time to consider the matter; and after receiving the opinions of his Dean and Chapter, whom he thought it right to consult, he has written to inform me that in view of the "*substantial consensus*" of his advisers, he "can no longer hesitate to say that he disapproves of my lecture being delivered." No special reasons are given for this determination further than that regard was had "to the present circumstances of our Church in the diocese of Edinburgh."

'It is not for me to question the propriety of this decision, however much I must regret it; and to say the truth, I cannot but admit that there have been appearances which to many of our members may seem quite sufficient to account for, and to justify it.

'At the same time, notwithstanding these discouragements, I wish it to be understood that my own opinion remains unaltered; and that if I had been *free* to follow my own judgment, I should still have hoped (*Deo adjuvante*) to give my promised lecture. As it is, I can only express my regret for any inconvenience which my change of purpose may cause to your Young Men's Association; while I desire to assure them of my best wishes for their welfare, and to assure you how highly I value your good opinion, and appreciate the generous confidence which both you and they have been inclined to place in me.—I am, my dear Dr. Mac Gregor, yours sincerely,

'C. WORDSWORTH, Bp. of St. Andrews.'

'As to the action of Bishop Dowden and his Chapter in thus practically preventing this venerable minister of Christ from addressing a large and influential body of Presbyterian young men on the subject of Christian unity, and from advocating it, too, "on his own lines," the public will form its own judgment. There will be but one opinion on another point—that throughout this business Dr. Wordsworth has acted like a Christian Bishop and an honourable Christian

gentleman. It would have been a touching and beautiful sight to have seen the aged Bishop, "a man greatly beloved," in the pulpit of St. Cuthberts, with many hundreds of young men gathered around him, discoursing to them those words of ripe and chastened wisdom which we find in his lecture. What possible harm such a spectacle could do to the Scottish Episcopal Church, or to any interest, human or divine, it is very difficult to see; but everybody knows his own business best.

'Dr. Wordsworth has not been allowed to occupy the pulpit of St. Cuthberts even in non-canonical hours. I am reminded of the time—also non-canonical—when he, the late Dean of Chester, and myself stood together in the pulpit of St. Giles, and when, throwing an arm round each of them, I said—"Behold an emblem and an earnest of the future." Alas! that the realisation of the earnest should look so far away.—I am, etc., JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

The correspondence was published in the newspapers, secular and religious, and clattered down that noisy causeway for some time. Dr. Mac Gregor said his say, and mastered his disappointment. It was one more evidence that the Restitution of a Catholic spirit of true unity was not yet at hand, and that the things of the law occupied the minds of some he had hoped to find filled with the spirit of life. His diary is full of lessons in the Danish language, preparatory to a proposed journey in that country, always a sure symptom of a spirit which needed the repose which came to him with the rules of grammar.

He had not always been intimate with Bishop Wordsworth. Some years before this incident he had received an anonymous letter:

'To the Rev. Dr. Mac Gregor, on the sermon he preached, and the salmon he caught at Pitlochry:

'"Ipse capi voluit. Quid apertius?"—JUVENAL.

'"Qui captas hominum mentes sermone diserto,
Piscator, Pastor, Rhetor Apostolicus,
Quid mirum si praeda tuo successerit hamo?
Credebat mutis te dare posse sonum."

'"O! mutis quoque piscibus
Donatura cycni, si libeat, sonum."—HOR. IV. iii. 19, 20.'

Mr. Logie Robertson has kindly given a translation of the lines:

'Fisher of men, you've brought me to the shore,
By power of words that hold me, and enrapture;
Compelling me, who never rhymed before,
Thus to confess my capture.'

On the original letter Dr. Mac Gregor made the following note:

'Greater familiarity with the handwriting of Bishop Wordsworth has satisfied me that he is the author; accordingly in February 1889 I wrote to him:

'"DEAR BISHOP WORDSWORTH,—Not long ago, in looking over some old papers, I came across some Latin lines that were sent to me anonymously. The handwriting, more familiar to me than it was in 1884, at once arrested me, and I saw that the kindly author of the beautiful lines was the much-beloved Bishop of St. Andrews. I am only now able to thank you, and to say how much I value them, and how carefully I shall preserve them as a tribute from one who has given his learning and his life to the sacred cause of Ecclesiastical Unity, and whose labour is not in vain in the Lord."'

It may be added that this early incident in the Episcopate of Bishop Dowden never interfered in the friendship which arose between the two 'Presbyters.' Very often in later years the two figures could be seen foregathering in walk and converse along the Queensferry Road.

His visit to London in May 1886 did not lead him into a more peaceful atmosphere. He took part, at the instance of Lord Balfour of Burleigh, in a meeting of the Marriage Law Defence Union, and he gave a lecture, 'with freedom,' in St. Columba's. During this visit he was possessed with an inquiring spirit in the region of chemical experiments, and ran the risk of being lost to his Church and his country:

'To the Royal Institution to see the solidification of nitrogen. This is the first time in the history of the world that nitrogen was solidified. It was done in the presence of Professor Stokes, Sir Frederick Abel, Lady Ashburton, and myself, by Professor Dewar of Cambridge. We all saw

the white snow of nitrogen. With a view of pouring it out of the small glass vessel, in the excitement of the moment the Professor incautiously tried to melt the wax of the stopper by holding it over a light. Immediately a frightful explosion took place. I thought it was death. When I opened my eyes Dewar was holding in his hand the twisted brass framework of the vessel, the glass having been blown into powder; one or two fragments I gathered and kept. Blood was flowing freely from the Professor's neck. Had the incision been a fraction of an inch nearer, the jugular vein would have been cut. All were bleeding; Lady Ashburton was cut on the forehead. I was on the left and was the only one unhurt. The gas was so much more powerful than dynamite that it saved us. Later, Lady Ashburton drove out and we called on Dewar, who was pluckily writing a letter regarding it to the *Times*. He was still smeared with blood, and was wondering how to present himself to his wife.'

The minister returned safely to his legitimate occupations, and as he left London he wrote to the Princess Louise:

'*June* 8, 1886.

'MADAM,—Let me thank you for my pleasant little visit to Kensington Palace.

'I owe Your Royal Highness a much heavier debt, which it has taken me five years to pay.

'I gratefully recall that to your kindly inspiration I owe some of the very happiest months which I have spent or hope to spend on this planet.

'That expedition to the North-West will ever be a delightful memory.—I am, Madam, with all dutiful respect, yours truly, JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

In May 1887 his work was again interrupted by the breaking of a blood-vessel in his throat. The doctors ordered complete rest, and the life of *dolce far niente*. The symptoms lasted a considerable time, and more than once he wrote, 'It is possible this may end in consumption. God's will be done.' The Duke wrote to him:—

'*July* 1887.

'I am very sorry to hear you have had some spitting of blood. You must take care of that. It is never to be trifled

with, and complete rest is the one prescription—perhaps a sea voyage would be the best thing for you. Preaching is out of the question. You have been to the Gareloch! Yes, that is a lovely bit of road between Peaton and Barbour. I know it well, but I never saw a sunset there. The view is still finer at the top of the road leading to Gareloch. From there you get all the Bowling-green Range and the Cobbler. I have often thought it one of the loveliest views in Scotland. But "comparisons are odious." Our variety in Scotland is immense. I like a low horizon on, at least, one side of one. Politics are more and more odious and disgusting. Gladstone is a political profligate of the first order, and what the result will be heaven only knows.'

The doctors sent him travelling, and he yachted with his friends the Cairds of Greenock through the healing Hebridean Seas. 'God has been merciful. I begin anew to give my life to His service and glory.'

He had need to gather his strength, for much yet remained for his hand to do. By September he was allowed to go to Balmoral. The minister of Crathie warned him, 'You are already aware that the three great secrets of success here are, Brevity, Brevity, Brevity.' He studied to obey, and is able to say:

'Dr. Reid told me that the Queen was much pleased. The sermon not too long nor in too loud a voice, and the prayers were wonderful.

'The Empress Eugenie is in the castle. After dinner I talked with her in Spanish.'

In the autumn of 1887 there comes the first notice of what was to take seven years of his life's best work:

'Talk with my colleague about church reparation. We examined the church as to repairs. Called on Hippolyte Blanc. This week memorable for beginning negotiations for restoration of St. Cuthberts.'

The story would fill a volume in itself. The generation that knew and loved what its minister called 'the dear but ugly old St. Cuthberts' has almost passed away. To most of those who worship in St. Cuthberts to-day it is the

church of their youth and manhood. The determining factor in the plans for alteration is told by Dr. Mac Gregor in the pages of St. Cuthberts magazine:

'The first duty which falls to me as the senior minister of St. Cuthberts is to explain as briefly and clearly as I can the origin and progress of the movement which has brought us this night together.

'Although it was time, and more than time, to effect some much-needed change in the internal arrangements of the church, the movement did not begin with either the kirk-session or the ministers. I wish to emphasise that point. The movement began in a great disaster. Those of you who may care to consult the chronicle of Oliver and Boyd's Almanac for 1884 will find the following: "On 16th June 1883 one hundred and eighty-three children were suffocated or crushed to death in a staircase of the Victoria Hall, Sunderland. They had been present at an entertainment in the hall." That is the brief but ominous announcement. This frightful massacre of innocents was caused by faulty egresses. A door got jammed, and the stream of little ones was checked in the exit with the above result, which greatly shocked the country at the time. It was natural that the attention of the public should be seriously turned to the egresses of great public buildings, where masses of human beings from time to time congregated; and among other buildings which were examined, St. Cuthberts was one; and, of course, the egresses were condemned as utterly unsatisfactory. The Burgh Engineer wrote a letter to the kirk-session, pointing out to them that the stairs and passages by which the people left the church were faulty and inadequate, and insisting that the exits should be remedied with the least possible delay. That letter was written in 1883.

'It is not improbable that the heritors quietly put the letter into the waste-paper basket, for both with them and the kirk-session the matter was forgotten. The letter was repeated in 1887, asking what had been done.

'It will be seen that the proposal, to start with, was a very humble one, viz. to reseat the area and first gallery, and to provide vestry and waiting-rooms. Out of this humble proposal the much more ambitious proposal, which will be expressed by the plans about to be exhibited, slowly

and carefully evolved themselves. These plans have been the result of many trials, of much labour, and much anxiety in dealing with a very difficult and refractory subject.

'Dr. Mac Gregor characterised the Report on the old building as full of disgrace, full of shame, and full of pity that such a state of matters should have existed so long. The church was draughty and ill-ventilated. In winter, properly speaking, it is not ventilated at all, the ventilators being shut. In summer, when they are open, the currents of wind from them are sometimes so great as to whirl the leaves of the Bibles in the pews below. I have no hesitation in saying that the health of my colleague and myself has seriously suffered from the unwholesomeness of the church. There can be nothing more hurtful than speaking for a length of time in a thoroughly vitiated air, unless it be the danger which both of us weekly encounter all through the winter in passing warm from the pulpit into what is practically the open air of the lobby, and reaching, not a vestry, but a public session-house when the long journey is done. I must say that we hardly think it creditable that the ministers of St. Cuthberts should not have the ordinary conveniences and privacy of a vestry or room for ourselves.

'But it is the comfort not of the ministers but of the people to which we mainly look. The seats are narrow and straight, and adapted to the ideas of comfort that prevailed more than a hundred years ago. Tall people cannot sit in them, and very stout people cannot get into them. It is quite enough to say that St. Cuthberts is the most uncomfortable, as well as most unwholesome, church in Edinburgh. This is not a matter on which there can possibly be two opinions. It is not a bad proof of the felt necessity of some alteration in this respect for me to say that my colleague and myself have not got a refusal from a single member of St. Cuthberts to whom we have applied in this matter.'

A terrific array of statistics as to the carbonic gas found in the galleries of the church, after a full diet, completed the minister's case.

No one objected to reconstruction, but when the work of investigation began, the supports of the galleries were found to be worm-eaten, and so unsafe that the Burgh Engineer was not thought to have been too active in his investigations.

Very soon the necessity for a new church broke on the colleagues and their coadjutors.

In May of 1888 the work of collecting the necessary money began. £2850 were promised in a week. 'No miser counts his gold as I do. Did not sleep—excited with success.' From that week began the sifting of the good and generous from the very few who incurred the Doctor's censure of illiberality. 'Told Mr. C—— I would expect a subscription for the church.' All who heard were wise in their generation, if they obeyed. The colleagues went about together, and as they appeared on the horizon purses were drawn out, and their owners were glad to escape with heavy ransoms. 'Seeing you won't be happy till you get it,' wrote one victim, 'I enclose cheque to help you with your alterations; but as you have not converted me to your scheme, only put £300. A seat-holder. Not a farthing more will I put into your mortar-tubs.' 'Thanks for your generous donation,' wrote the Robber Mac Gregor. 'You are quite right, "I am now happy that I have got it."—Your affectionate minister.'

With such an obedient community, the collection of what proved to be a very large sum of money was among the least of the difficulties. Legal impediments and vexatious litigation had to be met and overcome. The plans of the new church greatly exceeded the estimated cost, even when the fine original scheme for the church had been cut down. The foundations were not as rock hewn as was supposed. The new plans took in some of the graves lying to the south of the old church. The railway had destroyed hundreds of tombs, but no murmur against its operations had been raised. Graves which would now be included in the newly dedicated church were made the reason for an opposition as futile as it was mischievous.

Those who loved the old walls had their sentiments stirred. Lady Victoria Campbell wrote to him:

'I desire increased blessings for you in all your work this New Year. I don't forget the *reseating* of the Auld Kirk. I should be quite content with this, not turning it into some-

thing which the poor will be afraid to enter. It has always been known as the home of the poor. Don't lose them. I have heard this fear expressed.'

A Press notice of the interior of St. Cuthberts said:

'A gallery runs right round to the pulpit on both sides. It descends so low, that one entering the area beneath feels like crawling into a bottom berth on board ship, all the while inwardly trying to hope that everything above is quite secure, and that no crash of sudden descent will cause him to be sandwiched between falling timbers and hard floor.'

The driving force of such a state of things was great, and the plans for the new West Church, which was to have only one gallery, went on apace. When the day came for the last service within its walls, and when the site lay stripped and open to the skies, the minister resolutely looked to the rising of a new St. Cuthberts Church, built on the same foundations, to be a worthy sanctuary for that Gospel and those ordinances which for 'ages long' had been faithfully observed in that place. The difficulties and contradictions gave him many a sleepless night, but through the day he worked and laboured with a heart-whole devotion, and a courage that never failed.

When he left for Australia he hoped that all was settled, and in a fair way toward completion. It fell to his colleague to tell him on his return that the estimates exceeded by £9000 what had been given as the necessary cost. What he called the miserable work of cutting down the plans and collecting more money had to be undertaken.

It was not till 1891 that the congregation moved to the Synod Hall, and the Auld Kirk, like many of its predecessors, was pulled down to its foundations. In 1892 the first stone of the new building was laid by the Lord High Commissioner. The Marquis of Tweeddale intimated that Her Majesty had authorised him on that occasion to express Her Majesty's high sense of Dr. Mac Gregor's service to the Church.

In 1894 ministers and people entered once more into the

Church of St. Cuthberts, which will be for ever associated with the name of Dr. Mac Gregor.

To follow in detail the story of the reconstruction would be only tedious. From the foundations to the Courts of Session, from the contumacious stipulations of heritors to the contradictions of the public and the grave owners, the way was set with difficulties as insurmountable as the rock of Scottish State that guards the beautiful tower and steeple of the West Kirk. To make the mother church of the city a fit home for the traditions of the past, and the labours of the Church militant here on earth, was a work which took all the energies of its people. The difficulties were only overcome by the courageous leading and outlook of the ministers and the kirk-session. The business part of the undertaking was a heavy task, and the colleagues had to provide for the 'Church Interests' of a great congregation, and the network of organisations which had increased and multiplied in the years of their ministry.

During its reconstruction two events of importance in the life of the senior minister took place. The first was his journey in 1889 to represent the Church of Scotland in Australia, at the invitation of the Hon. J. Balfour. The Free Church sent Principal Rainy as their representative. Speaking of his commission to our dominions beyond the sea, after the death of the Principal, he says:

'In the year 1889 Principal Rainy represented the Free Church of that time at the Jubilee of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, Australia, and I had the honour of representing the Church of Scotland. It was a busy and, I am sure, a happy season for us both. I could not have had a kinder or more honoured colleague. We spoke on the same platforms, and preached from the same pulpits, and sat at the same Communion Table. From what I saw of him then I came to understand why he was so beloved by those who knew him well. Of his high mental capacity and his consummate ability as a Church leader there can be but one opinion. Our sister Church has to-day, and has always had, among her clergy men of great eminence; but I question if there ever was one who received from the whole body, to an

equal extent, its loyal and unquestionable allegiance and profound and affectionate respect. He was a born leader of men, and his loss to his Church is irreparable.'

They were loyal colleagues, but Dr. Mac Gregor always said that in all that time he never felt he got more intimate or knew the Principal better. Probably a unique experience, for it was an individual apart from ordinary men that kept company with the Doctor without becoming intimate with him.

The Presbytery granted him leave of absence, and his kirk-session were unselfishly 'delighted!' Before his departure he wrote to Sir Henry Ponsonby, asking him to lay the matter before the Queen. Her Majesty at once wrote to him :

'Pavillon La Rochefoucauld,
'Biarritz, *March* 22, 1889.

'The Queen thanks Dr. Mac Gregor for his kind letter, and assures him that she approves of his accepting the invitation from Australia to be present at the jubilee of the Scottish Church there.

'She thinks that the voyage (if he is a good sailor), the change, the rest, and the interest of seeing that distant colony may do his health good, and that we may welcome him back in renewed strength and health.

'The Queen thanks Dr. Mac Gregor for all his kind words. She has indeed had many trials and sorrows of late, one of the greatest being to see the life of her dear, eldest, truly gifted child—as it were shipwrecked—and her future a comparative blank, lonely and sad, deprived of one of the best of husbands and men.

'We enjoy being here and think the air very fine, the sea magnificent, and the scenery towards the Pyrenees so beautiful.

'We shall make excursions into Spain ; first privately to Fuenterabia, and afterwards to San Sebastian, to meet the Queen Regent. Pray let us, the Queen, hear of Dr. Mac Gregor's safe arrival.

'She thinks he ought not to go quite alone.'

The thoughtful advice that he should not go alone touched her chaplain deeply. Others had foreseen the same

thing, and he was accompanied by Mr. J. J. Herdman as his secretary. 'What should I have done without him?' he often exclaims throughout the long journey. He was absent 202 days, and he travelled 32,043 miles. Before he departed his fellow-citizens gave him a dinner. Principal Sir William Muir was in the chair, and in the hundred friends that gathered round him there were representatives of every profession and society in Edinburgh. There were as many who could not come. 'I wish I could go with you,' wrote Lord Rosebery, 'or even that I could share your stirrup-cup in Edinburgh, to which they have bidden me.'

He enjoyed the rest of the voyage, the life of the colony, and he watched with an observant eye the position of all the Churches in Australia. His note-books were numerous, and filled with the life around him. He only once broke down in his strenuous work. To Princess Louise he wrote:

'WARRNAMBOOL, VICTORIA,
'*Sept.* 5, 1889.

'DEAR PRINCESS LOUISE,—I am sure your Royal Highness will forgive me for writing to you in pencil, when I tell you that I do so from bed, to which I have been confined for five days, in consequence of a chill caught while crossing those vast western plains, the chill itself being largely due to nervous exhaustion from excessive labour.

'I have had a very happy as well as busy time of it. No amount of reading can give one any adequate idea of this wonderful Southern World.

'New Zealand especially deserves the name of the Brighter Britain of the South. It is a magnificent country in every way, and although lying at the back of beyond, with no highway of commerce leading past its gates, its varied and boundless resources are certain to ensure for it a prosperous future.

'What it wants is people with a little capital. The mere handful who are in it have done wonders in the way of developing its capabilities, and of running into debt! I travelled over it from end to end, saw its wonderful hot lake region, a veritable Dante's *Inferno*, the scene of the great eruption of three years ago, where there are hundreds of

miles of country still lying under glaciers of mud; saw its glorious lake country and its great mountains, almost everything but its Kauri forests, and came away enchanted with it and its people.

'As the product of fifty years, Melbourne amazes me. It is a great and fully equipped English city, if possible with a life more bursting with energy, transplanted to these far summer shores.

'There is no such perfect tram-car system anywhere. If they go on as they are doing they will make Melbourne one of the finest cities in the world. The winter climate in New Zealand is an everlasting spring.

'They are both baby countries, with all a baby's faults, which they will get over in time. For instance, a servant in this house has just coolly informed her mistress that she is going out to a concert to-night, and that she need not expect her back till past midnight. The same servant spoke yesterday about "a lady calf," and "the gentleman who does the garden." At my club "it is the young lady who does out the rooms."

'The young colonist here is intellectually deficient in imagination, and usually deficient in veneration. Of course it is not the country's fault that it has no background of tradition and of poetry, none of the "light that never shone on sea or shore." That *must* be long in coming. But the faults of the people, I repeat, are the faults of youth.

'Forgive me, Madam, for prosing so.

'Let me hope that your great work is steadily advancing, and, as far as that can be possible to an artist, to your satisfaction (the statue of Queen Victoria).

'Let me renew my thanks for the dear red jacket. On those occasions on board ship when it is the correct thing to make a guy of oneself, and to dine in fancy dress, the only article I required was my red jacket.

'Our jubilee proceedings proved a great success every way, and ended in a gift of £60,000 to the Australian Church. Will your Royal Highness kindly remember me to Lord Lorne, and say that after all I have seen and all I admire in this Southern World, I have seen nothing in the slightest degree calculated to alter my faith in the splendid future which lies before the great North-West. For human beings life will ever roll more pleasantly here than there. But pleasure is not the chief end of life; and there is one crop

in which Canada will inevitably surpass Australia—the crop of men and women.—I am, Madam, yours truly,

'JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

He was elected as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in the year 1891. It was felt to be a recognition on the part of the Church of the splendid work he had achieved on her behalf, and it was a distinguished mark of the great and deserved popularity he had attained throughout Scotland. It was not an honour he had sought after, and when it came to him it was the insistence of his old friend, Professor Mitchell of St. Andrews, which determined him to accept the chair.

He wrote to the Dean of Windsor:

'*Dec.* 3, 1890.

'MY DEAR DEAN,—With great reluctance I have consented to be nominated as next Moderator of the General Assembly. Let me speak in authoritative tones and say that you must, as an old friend, as a grandson of the Kirk, and above all as a Bishop of the Church of England, make time and show yourself in the Assembly which meets May 21st.

'We are fighting hard to preserve the Church of Scotland, with whose continued existence the Church of England has far more concern than she is at all aware of, for Jas. A. Campbell said to me the other day, "the Disestablishment of the Church of Scotland will be the digging of the grave of the Church of England."

'I have consented for the second time to be chairman of the Annual Dinner of Scotsmen in Dublin, on St. Andrew's Day 1891. The representation was made to me in the following terms: "We want to unite the Archbishop of Dublin and the leading clergy of his Church to meet you at a public breakfast. We have been in communication with His Grace, and he expresses himself highly pleased with the proposal. So also does the Dean of the Chapel Royal."

'Would to God something could be done to draw the two National Churches closer together. The Bishop of Rochester was at last Assembly, and the effect was wholly excellent. How much greater if a Bishop who is a Scot comes.—Yours ever,

'JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

He had not served in Church courts, though he had always been a loyal upholder of their statutes and commands. He felt deeply the enthusiasm which welcomed his appointment, and the warm remembrances of his brethren for all he had done to maintain the National Church.

As he had laboured in Church Defence in the past, so it was felt he would labour in the future. As long as the Church was in danger, all who knew him understood that he would spend and be spent in her service. The prospect of a general election was again before the country, and the defenders of Church Interests were once more preparing for defence. Dr. Mac Gregor threw himself into the preparations for his office with all his usual minute care and attention. His predecessor, Dr. Boyd, supplied him with much detailed information. 'Your man Rankine, who was also mine, is everything that is punctual, intelligent, and obliging. May God bless you, my dear old friend, and give you as kindly an Assembly as I had.'

'My dear Celtic minister,' wrote one of the Inveraray friends, 'I am rale prood o' ye.' Colin sends this impudent message: 'Tell Dr. Hamish to *moderate* his language. I am the only one that will tell him this.' From Dr. Barclay came a word echoed by many grateful hearts: 'Your nomination to the highest position our dear old Church can offer is only what your services to her merit.' Dr. Cameron Lees, glancing back to the days of their early comradeship, wrote him: 'There are few of your old friends who rejoice more than I do. At this crisis in the Church it is a very wise step, and an act that will commend itself throughout Scotland.'

The Moderator designate knew his frailty in matters of ceremony, and he wisely sought guidance and help from his chaplain, the Rev. Archibald Fleming. He had been Dr. Mac Gregor's assistant, and was now the minister of Newton Parish. The Doctor was not an easy person to steer through the ceremonies and duties of his office. His chaplain had his hands full, but Mr. Fleming's versatile gifts were of great assistance in the triumphant career of the Moderator.

One Assembly differs from another only according to the

questions brought before it. At the close Dr. Mac Gregor said:

'This Assembly will be a memorable one for its peace and orderliness, for the high intellectual level on which all its discussions have been kept, and for the marked spiritual tone which has characterised all its proceedings. It will be memorable in an especial manner for the marked ability and for the calm, trustful spirit in which it has discussed those great social questions which are to occupy the coming age.'

His high reputation as a speaker, and his general popularity, produced a scene on the closing night which was almost dangerous. The members could neither get in at the commencement nor out at the end. Years later he wrote his reminiscences of the occasion:

'When I gave my final address the crowd around the door was such that I had to be dragged through it to the ruin of my costly lace. Great complaints were made in the Assembly, which were quieted by A. K. H. B., who rose up and said, "Gentlemen who have suffered from the crowd may be comforted by the assurance that it will never occur again!"

'One hundred and thirty-four sat down at my dinner, and I was the first Moderator to have a band playing!'

His closing Address was on his heart's desire and prayer for his country—the Union of the Churches in Scotland. It would bear saying yet again to-day, for it is as true and prophetic as when it was written twenty years ago. It abounds in words of passionate appeal, and it closes with utterances that lock the ranks 'shoulder to shoulder' of all those who in truth and sincerity love the Church of our fathers:

'We dare not barter, for any consideration whatever, the heritage which has come down to us through centuries, hallowed by the prayers, and the tears, and the blood of our forefathers. It is not ours to give away. Should it be torn from our hands, our hands will be clean. Whatever the ultimate issue may be, we can fearlessly face the future, armed with the conviction that we did our duty by the Church and by the land we love.'

'*Jan.* 9, 1891.

'DEAR BISHOP DESIGNATE OF ROCHESTER AND DEAR FRIEND,—You quite know what a terrible disappointment your letter was. I still am counting on your managing somehow, by hook or by crook, to show your face at the Assembly. We can only do with things as they will do with us. I know you will do your best, and shall never give up hope till the last. This is the most trying year our dear old Church has ever passed through. But

'"What time our heart is overwhelmed
And in perplexity,
Do Thou me lead unto the Rock
That higher is than I."

'Yours truly,

'JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

CHAPTER XV

THE NEW ST. CUTHBERTS

1891-1900

'I lay me down to sleep
With little thought or care
Whether the waking find
Me here or there.

'My half day's work is done,
And this is all my part,
To give a patient God
My patient heart.'

THE year of his Moderatorship was the culminating point in the life of Dr. Mac Gregor. He had been ordained for thirty-six years, and had for the greater part of that time ministered in large parishes, and to great congregations. His services to the Church had been recognised by the Queen, and by the people of Scotland. He had proved that he had the power of organisation in the affairs of the parish, and that he knew how to defend the Church when her existence was brought into the region of practical politics. His capacity for making friends, and for a wide hospitality, had made him known to his fellow-citizens, who were proud of his gifts and valued his cordial kindness.

It was natural that the press, while he held distinguished office in the Church of Scotland, should endeavour to describe his gifts, and account for his success in the pulpit. The papers teemed with descriptions, and with anecdotes of his life. In one of these articles there were some ten stories attributed to him and his parents. He seldom noticed these personalities, but on this occasion he felt it necessary to make a protest to the editor of the paper. The original article still exists, and each anecdote which

had no basis of truth is annotated on the margin 'a lie.' The letter contains some of the characteristic sentiments of the Doctor, and is worth inserting for that reason :

'*Jan.* 1892.

'DEAR SIR,—In a well-meant and generous sketch of my life which appeared in your impression of the 14th inst., the writer says :—"The good stories told of Dr. Mac Gregor are almost endless in variety." While many of these stories are excellent, most of them, it is needless to say, are utterly without foundation, as almost every one in your sketch is. With that I never once found fault, nor do I now. For a story may be well worth the telling though it never existed in the realm of fact. But one must draw the line somewhere, and I draw it at a story which you tell, and which was quite new to me, of a sermon of mine being preached so often that it became "excessively dirty," and received from me a name in keeping with its colour. An air of solid reality is thrown around this statement by the introduction of my brother's name in such a way as to indicate that it came straight from him. I object to this story, not because it is utterly untrue, but because it is vulgar and dirty and, to me, offensively so. I have no doubt that the writer of the sketch told it in good faith, and without the least intention of paining me. But it pains me none the less. The man who could do what has been attributed to me would be unworthy of the profession to which I have the honour to belong.

'It is impossible for a minister to cultivate, either in himself or his people, too high a respect for everything that pertains to the public worship of God. It is the most solemn service in which a human being can engage, and preaching is part of it. I have tried to put in practice what I have long held and taught. I hold more firmly as life goes on, that in all that concerns the worship of our Maker, from the innermost spirit of the worshipper, through its prayers, its praises, its preaching, down to the vessels and furniture, to the floors and walls, to the very stone and lime of the building, we ought to give God, not our slovenliest and our worst, but our comeliest and best. I have tried to do that. In almost every church I have held I have left some permanent evidence of my strong desire to make it a beautiful as well as a holy House. If

slovenliness is offensive anywhere it is offensive here, and uncleanliness in any form repulsive. If the interior of the House of God cannot always be costly, it can at least be bright and sweet, and clean the House of God should ever be.

'In these matters a great improvement is going on under our very eyes, and it was sorely needed. The Roman Catholics and the Episcopalians have long set us Presbyterians an example in this respect. Far in the wilds of the Canadian North-West I one day entered a Roman Catholic chapel. Externally it was a mere wooden shanty. Inside it was specklessly clean. So ought every building to be where men congregate for prayer. It may seem to some a small matter, but I go the length of saying that for a minister to have the habit of dawdling into his pulpit at any time from five to fifteen minutes after the appointed time for service is to show a want of reverence for the Presence into which he is about to come, and a want of respect for the work in which he is to be engaged. It is just as easy for a minister and his people to be in their respective places at the hour as to be there five minutes or fifty minutes afterwards. If it is bad manners to be unpunctual in our worldly engagements, it is not good manners to be habitually unpunctual in the service of God.

'It need hardly astonish you, Sir, if having such views the story to which I refer has caused me some pain. And, I may add, that its having been allowed to find its way into circulation through your columns has filled me with a little mild amazement.

'I may also say that the words which the writer of the sketch puts into my father's mouth are very unlikely to have fallen from one who had been in process of being trained for entering the University.—I am, etc.,

'JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

Only on one other occasion did he care to correct the published impressions of himself and his work as a minister. During the excitement of the General Election a child was baptized in St. Cuthberts by the name of 'William Gladstone.' The newspapers reported the incident, and said the Doctor's political opinions had made him show an obvious distaste to giving the child this name. Dr. Mac Gregor

wrote a letter showing that it was his habit to receive the parents in private before the rite was administered, and that he had thus known the name which was to be given, and had neither felt nor shown any feeling save that which he always experienced 'in administering one of the most solemn sacraments in the Church of Christ.'

One newspaper attack he did not choose to notice. He was preaching in 1887 in another church, and had occasion to mention an Address on a theological subject given by Mr. Arthur Balfour at a Church Congress in England. Alluding to the matter dealt with, he said it was by that 'wonderful man, Mr. Balfour.' An indignant Liberal in the congregation immediately wrote that in his admiration for the Secretary for Ireland, 'a name detested by many,' Dr. Mac Gregor was dragging politics into the pulpit, and to a congregation not his own. 'Wonderful' was a word often in his mouth, whether he was admiring the works of God, or the 'talents' bestowed on the people he admired. Through all his public career he had a great regard for Mr. Balfour, and he placed in him a confidence which he did not feel for any other statesman he had watched in public life. 'I pray for him night and morning, I love his ways,' he would often say to one who was closely connected with his family. He could never keep out of the pulpit the thoughts and convictions of his daily life. He was 'instant in prayer' in the sense that if he could not make the matter a subject of prayer, he did not think it a subject which should occupy his mind. The natural, impulsive expression of his thoughts could not be left at home for week-day use; he was always his natural self in the pulpit, in the social gathering, in the highways, and the home.

'I made my father laugh,' wrote one to him, 'when I saw what a splendid Church Defence meeting you had; I said I could imagine your opening prayer asking "for the wisdom this government so greatly needs."'

An American visitor described the services in St. Cuthberts; he was depressed by the prayers:

'They seemed to think that King Edward and his family

were about the only people on earth to be remembered. The long wait in the vestibule had chilled our blood, and we felt that the temperature, physical and spiritual, was low. After some more of the service, read by the Assistant, the Doctor again led in prayer, and in a voice of deep earnestness asked for a special blessing upon the President of the United States and all his dear people, to whom we are so closely related by ties of birth and blood.'

The American heard another thing in the sermon. 'The British Empire is the greatest, the best, the *free-est* government the sun shines on.' 'Accustomed,' he says, 'to think that a republican form of government was the only kind that had much of freedom in it, and that where a king reigns there must be more or less of tyranny, we could not at once believe that we had heard aright.'

Conviction that there was truth in the statement was admitted by the republican as he listened to the development of the theme.

American visitors crowded to hear him. He had a great love for their nation, and never forgot their people and their wide territory. 'Allow a stranger,' wrote one, 'who was at your service, to express on behalf of a party of eight Americans, their grateful appreciation of your remembrance of the President and Government and the people of the United States in your prayer, and your particular mention of General Grant. Please receive our grateful assurance that we were much drawn to yourself, and you made us feel at home by those few sentences of prayer.'

One of his friends had been travelling in the Hebrides, and had been tried by the talkative unreserve of the American tourist. The result was an article in the *Scotsman*, humorously caricaturing these fellow-travellers. The writer next day incautiously went to see Dr. Mac Gregor. He stated that among the duties which he must not forget was, 'a letter to Cooper to abuse him for putting into the paper that which might make ill-feeling.' There was a somewhat uncomfortable pause in the conversation, which did not escape the Doctor. 'Did *you* write that article?'

Confession had to be made, and after a wild scene of retribution, there followed words not easily forgotten, of the amity and love which should always be cultivated 'between the two greatest English-speaking countries on God's earth.'

Some correspondence of an amicable kind passed between an American correspondent and the writer of the article, and on these letters the Doctor wrote:

'MY DEAR "LAMB,"—I am delighted on many grounds with the letter of Mrs. Joel V. It is clever and characteristic of her race. It relieves my mind considerably regarding the effect of your escapade on our dear cousins. It states the truth, that the Americans show to much better advantage in their own land than in ours. For any sake take care of that "greased lightning" which seems your habitual mode of locomotion, and conserve a little of your boiling energy. None of your friends want to see the end of you yet.'

'He certainly is a live wire' was the modern impressionist description that one of these Americans gave of the Doctor.

His sense of personality in the great crowds around him had been with him from his earliest days. As he stood in the pulpit looking into the faces of those he saw, the flash of his recognition was instantaneous. Miss Bird, the well-known traveller, was among his intimate friends, and he knew that his ministry had been much in her life. On one occasion, before starting for the East, she entered St. Cuthberts, purposely going to a retired pew. He saw her quiet entry. He knew of her adventurous journey, and remembered some words which had passed between them, and she soon found that she was commended 'in all her ways' to the Divine protection.

Those searching eyes never fell on the face of friends without a recollection of their needs, or their presence recalled to him the 'vision' associated with his own labours. Some verses found under the pillow of a soldier in the Civil War in America were given to him by Elizabeth, Duchess of Argyll. They were sent to her by Sumner during the war, and were for long little known in this country. Two of the verses head this chapter. They were often heard in

St. Cuthberts, and if the preacher's eyes fell on any of that circle who voyaged in the *Columba* to 'the little lone isle' in the Western seas, they were sure to hear the well-loved lines repeated by a voice musical with 'the thought of other years.'

It was the personal note, whether for himself or for others, which made his teaching so arresting. He *saw* the individual before him. One Sunday the subject of honest industrial life was in his mind, and with a memory of what careless work had meant in the destruction of his home, he lifted his eyes to the highest gallery of the West Kirk, and in splendid direct language appealed to the plumbers to be responsible in their calling. He never administered the sacrament of Baptism and the Holy Communion without a moving appeal to the parental tie, and the sacredness of life in the home; and to neglect the divine command 'to keep the Feast' was to him the neglect of the call of Love and Duty. 'Why break the hearts of those you love? Why bring with sorrow their grey hairs to the grave? Why give your young manhood to what must bring you undying remorse?' were the poignant words in an Address to the young men, whose happiness in life was as dear to him as though they had been sons of his own name.

It was the arresting note in his teaching that made the Jew in race and religion a convert to the light he had received in St. Cuthberts. Mr. Raphael has himself narrated how, 'one Sabbath morning, in company with my wife, I went to the church. During the Doctor's discourse the text "God was manifest in the flesh," was incidentally quoted. This text made such a deep impression on me that I took the hand of my wife, who sat next me, while I whispered, "What the preacher has now said must either be the veriest falsehood or the profoundest truth."'

That his utterances were always guarded and balanced was not the case, and as he expressed himself at once, he occasionally came up against the feelings and prejudices of his hearers.

He had the profoundest distrust of the doctrines of Rome,

and he equally distrusted the extreme Ritualists in the Church of England, because he believed their ways tended to weaken the true work of that great branch of the Reformed Faith. When Mr. Glyn was made Bishop of Peterborough, he wrote to Lady Mary: 'I rejoice with you in this new joy. He will be an ideal Bishop. May the Great Head of the Church spare him for good and great work in the greatest Church on earth. His influence, I know, will be calmly and wisely exerted in keeping that great Church within Scriptural lines, and away from Romish superstition and misery.'

During one of the periods when the Church of England had the extreme party within her walls brought before public attention, Dr. Mac Gregor, who was always moved by internal dissension in the Church Catholic and Apostolic, as usual mentioned these troubles in his prayers. The expressions he used seemed to an Anglican present to imply a censure on the whole Church of England, and in a state of excitement he wrote to the minister. The answer, as usual, was self-revealing:

'DEAR SIR,—I read your letter with blank amazement till I came to the signature, when I thought I saw its explanation in your hot, Highland blood.

'So far as I can get at your meaning, you commit the vital mistake of making a misguided party in the Church of England, *the* Church of England; and when I state my opinions as to what that party is doing, you regard me as maligning and abusing the Church. I utterly deny it. I have never used a word against the Church of England, and trust I never shall. I do not yield to you in my respect for that Church, and in my earnest and constant prayers for its welfare. An injury done to it I regard as an injury, not only to its members, but to the nation and empire as a whole, and to the kingdom of Christ throughout the world. Its destruction as an Established National Church I should regard as one of the greatest calamities which could befall our beloved land; and in its case Disestablishment and Destruction I regard as synonymous terms. Towards that issue the Romanising party within it are working, unintentionally it may be, but more successfully than all her

other enemies combined. For that and for other sufficient reasons, in common with millions outside and inside the Church of England, I detest and abhor that party, and have spoken about it to my own people and to the public generally, not too much but far too little.

'I am sorry to have to say so, but you are angry with me for words which I used in public prayer—words unwritten but not unconsidered—"We pray for the Church of England, that Thou wouldest remove the follies and the errors in that great Church." You say "I should never have dreamt of praying for (*sic*) the follies of the Church of *Scotland*."

'If you ever pray for that Church, why should you not pray—not "for her follies," but for their removal, if you believed that there were follies in it, endangering its very existence?

'If you believe as I do, that there are follies and errors in your Church, endangering its existence, why should you not pray that these follies might be removed? Is the "Confessional" not a folly and a danger? Is the "Mass" not a folly and a danger? You were pained by what I said. What was your pain to mine when I saw, as I have done in more than one of your churches, the Romish Mass illegally celebrated, and saw it, not so much with anger as with infinite regret and sorrow unto tears? And yet with all this going on, with the heart of the Nation stirred to its depths by these mediæval follies, and shocking and scandalous illegalities, with the warning given, a day or two ago, in Parliament to the Bishops to set their house in order, you take it upon you to censure a Christian minister for praying in his own church, as he does by his own bedside, that God would remove the follies and the errors that mar the beauty, impair the usefulness, and endanger the existence of what, in the course of my sermon, I called "the greatest Church on earth."

'Referring to my remarks on Ritualism, you say, "It gave me great pain to hear your tirade against us," placing yourself in the ranks of Ritualists. My only comment is that there are Ritualists and Ritualists—and that it was of those whom you call "extreme" that I was speaking. As to the extent to which this "extreme" class has leavened the Church of England, there is wide difference of opinion among men who have as good opportunities of judging it as you can possibly have. I wish I could believe what I can

only earnestly hope, that they are, as you say, "a very small section of the Church."

'There is a sentence in your letter whose meaning I find it difficult to catch. You say, "The impression given to your hearers this morning was that the Church of England was corrupted by pernicious ritual and false teaching." If that means that this ritual, etc., exists in the Church of England and is pernicious, I say, Yes! That is the impression I desired to produce. If, on the other hand, it means that the whole Church of England is corrupted through and through by pernicious ritual, etc., I simply say that no such impression was intended, and that no such impression was produced on my "hearers." It seems to have been produced on you, but you were no more the congregation of St. Cuthberts last Sunday, than the extreme Ritualists are the Church of England. Besides I was preaching, not to a congregation of Ritualistic English clergymen, but to a congregation of intelligent and impartial Scottish people.

'I am not sorry that you have given me an opportunity of speaking plainly on the matters of which you wrote, for they are the very gravest which concern the Church in this land as the century is passing away.

'I express my regret for having pained you. If I have pained you again by anything I have written, I pray you to remember that "faithful are the wounds of a friend."

'I am, yours truly, and a friend of the Church of England,

'JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

The Anglican clergyman acknowledged the frankness of the letter, and said he could not plead any blood hotter than that of a citizen of Edinburgh. He assured the Doctor that out of the London diocese no Ritualist had a foothold, and if his correspondent knew otherwise, he let the matter rest.

At this time he was deeply interested in the Biography of Archbishop Tait. Writing to Sir Charles Dalrymple, he speaks of a visit to the Bishop of Rochester, who was ill, and he adds: 'I have been reading his Life of the great Archbishop with much interest. Shall I sum him up by saying: great natural gifts well trained; great knowledge of human nature; strong common sense; a clear eye to see the right track amid thorny and perplexing paths; a strong and

determined will at all costs to follow it; and, crowning all that—the want of which deforms an otherwise faultless character—a simple faith in God, a reverent trust in His dear Son. This last feature, the faith he learned at his mother's knee, is what most commends him to me. The best part of man is that which brings him nearest, and makes him likest his Maker.'

'DEAR LADY MARY,—I have a favour to ask of you. Would you and your man call on my friends some day soon? They tell me they have no fixed place of worship, as they cannot get seats in your church, and wander about.

'I met at their house the priest of this place, an oily, soft-sawdery, unable to look you straight in the face sort of man. He is no doubt an excellent person, so much so that I have asked him to stay with me in Edinburgh, but I would rather they knew your husband. I write helter skelter. My thoughts of you are always thoughts of peace.

'*Si sic omnes!* Receive my warmest blessing.'

He received a prompt answer:

'Edward wants me to tell you how sorry he is for that oily, soft-sawdery, unable to look you in the face sort of "dissenter." We both feel he must have suffered a severe concussion of the brain, heart, and nerves in your presence!'

It is among the ironies of fate that in his later years he should have been assailed on his supposed ritualism by a few as bigoted and narrow in their Protestantism as were the extreme 'Catholic' party. His attitude towards 'Innovations' in worship has been noted throughout this memoir. By the time the new church of St. Cuthberts was dedicated for service many of these things had ceased to be noticed. Other 'Innovations' in the service attracted attention. The Doctor permitted himself to be 'interviewed' on the subject, and the article bears on it the stamp of true reporting:

'I remarked on the alterations I had seen in St. Cuthberts since last I was in the old church some five years ago. The pulpit is at the side; there are reading desks for the clergy, and in some modified way a ritual.

'"There is ritual in everything," said the Doctor. "Singing a psalm is a ritual; the Lord's Supper is a ritual;

Mrs. MacGregor

Baptizing a child is a ritual. Still, I would not allow the word 'ritual' in connection with our service. A comely Communion table is not ritualism. Remove the pulpit from the position which it held, and once almost universally, in Presbyterian services as the centre of all worship, to its proper place as only a part of worship. I do not know where they had a pulpit before the Westminster Assembly.

'"There is a distinct rise in the æsthetic feeling of the country in all matters; this is showing its effect in the house of God and its services. This has nothing to do with ritualism, but is a simple proof that the entire population is more refined than it used to be."

'But is there any sacerdotal tendency in Presbyterianism?

'"Certainly not. The fact is, Presbyterianism always has held a high idea of the ministry and the sacraments. I remember three years ago travelling in the south of England, and in a pretty little church there the vicar remarked that the Sacrament with us was not what it was with them. 'Oh, indeed,' I replied, 'excuse me for saying so; that remark proves the benighted darkness that prevails through the English mind with regard to all that is Scottish. Would it amaze you if I tell you that our doctrine of the Sacrament is, if possible, higher than your own?' Then I gave him the words in which our doctrine is defined:

'"The Lord's Supper is a Sacrament wherein, by giving and receiving bread and wine according to Christ's appointment, His death is showed forth, and the worthy receivers are, not after a corporal and carnal manner, but by faith, made partakers of His body and blood with all His benefits, to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace."

'"After that," said Dr. Mac Gregor, "never speak of the English people getting more out of the Sacrament than the Scottish people." The vicar admitted he was quite ignorant of our doctrine. "They know as much about what is going on in the inside of the Scottish Presbyterian Church as of what is going on in Kamschatka," said the Doctor.'

Early in 1892 the nation had been absorbed in the death of the Duke of Clarence. Dr. Mac Gregor wrote to the Queen, in his office as Moderator, an account of what had passed in Edinburgh:

'MADAM,—Our solemn service in St. Giles is just over. It was a touching and most impressive sight. The old

church was crowded to overflowing, and ten thousand people had to turn away. Rarely, if ever, in all its chequered history, has the venerable church been filled with a congregation of worshippers more typical of the nation, or more profoundly moved.

'Now that the grave has closed over all that was mortal of your Majesty's beloved grandson, and when the first sharpness of the shock is over, your Majesty will forgive me for again assuring you of the dear love of your loyal people, and of none more than your ancient and attached Church of Scotland.

'As far as human sympathy can sustain your Majesty in this new and great sorrow, with which it has pleased our Heavenly Father to close the evening of your days, you have it, I believe, in such measure as was never given another human being. You have what is best of all, the sympathy of your once suffering and now exalted Saviour, to whose ready help and strong comfort I now commend your Majesty and your Royal House.

'The God of our Fathers bless you and spare you for many years to be what you have been, a blessing not only to our Empire but to all mankind.—I am, Madam, your faithful servant, JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

The year in which he was Moderator, his niece, Miss Minnie Mac Gregor, took charge of the hospitalities of his home, and of the social functions connected with his office. Later in the season he writes in his diary: 'I have spent a week in solitude, which I do not much like. I feel how valuable a companion in my life would be. I fear it is too late. Went to call on old friends.'

His life was fuller than ever, and he says he has not five minutes to himself. Among other journeys he paid a visit to Balquhidder, 'the land of my fathers. Rain and mist have given me the first welcome.' He went on to Eden House, Banff: 'A warm greeting from Mr. Clark and all my friends. After family prayers went down to the Deveron. On the fourth cast, in the presence of them all, I caught a salmon. I lost the whole day at the side of the river, but got nothing more. Next day, in "the Moderator's Pool," I got a salmon of 18 lb., and brought it to land.

Sent it off to Lady Ashburton. The gut broke and lost me another.'

Again and again he notices his loneliness in the midst of his life, and in 1892 the desire of his heart was granted to him.

The world was taken by surprise when his engagement to Miss Helen Murray was announced. His friends experienced a feeling of great relief when they knew the future that lay before him. 'I am delighted,' wrote the Duke. 'I told you long ago that you ought to marry. A man without a wife is a man without a home, and you, especially, need domestic affection, sympathy, and care.' A. K. H. B. wrote 'that he was thankful the fire was again to be lighted on his hearth. God bless you and your wife to be!' Till the day when his bodily presence was carried forth from his house for the last time, the light of a great devotion never died down on his hearth. He received in full measure the understanding sympathy for which he had craved; never again was he to suffer from loneliness, for the companion he had chosen was one with him in every thought of his heart. The engagement was not announced till Dr. Mac Gregor had communicated his intentions to the Queen. As usual, he received an answer from Her Majesty's own hand:

'WINDSOR CASTLE, *July* 16, 1892.

'The Queen thanks Dr. Mac Gregor very much for his kind letter, and from her heart wishes that the important step he is about to take may prove to be a source of comfort and happiness to him in his lonely life full of arduous cares.

'The present time is full of anxieties and annoyances, but the Queen hopes they may be overcome, and feels with him that God orders all for the best and will not forsake us.'

The marriage took place in St. Giles Cathedral on the 6th September 1892. His old friend, Dr. Charteris, performed the rite, and with him were Dr. Alison and the Rev. A. Wallace Williamson. Their friends gathered round in an unnumbered and enthusiastic crowd. From the west of England, where they travelled for a brief visit, Dr. Mac Gregor wrote:

'ST. IVES, CORNWALL, *Sept.* 1892.

'MY DEAR LADY MARY,—Among the very few letters which I took with me for answer was yours. It deserved more prompt attention, awakening as it did, dear and hallowed memories of a now distant but never absent past. If I was much to you in those days, you and yours will never know in this world how much you were to me. No time, no change will ever alter the tie that was then formed, nor affect the results of that time.

'Thank you, dear Lady Mary, for your beautiful words about my marriage. Eighteen years of loneliness I found quite enough for one who has never ceased to yearn for sympathy and companionship. I believe that, with God's blessing, I have found one who will make the downward slope to the inevitable grave, bright and happy. For which and for all mercies God's name be praised.'

'NEW INN, CLOVELLY, *Oct.* 7, 1892.

'MY DEAR LADY VICTORIA,—Here, at Clovelly, the mournful tidings reached me an hour ago that our great and sweet singer had passed from "here to there." No man since Wordsworth died has done so much for English song, English speech, I might almost say, for our national morals and manhood. Tennyson is one of the very few great poets of the world; one of the very few of whom we can be quite sure that he will never die. No man, dead or living, has done so much to restore to English literature its ancient Saxon simplicity and strength. Look how his very finest gems abound in monosyllables and dissyllables. He has taught me to abhor sesquipedalianism in every shape and form.

'I estimate the debt under which he has laid this and all future generations by the debt which I myself am conscious that I owe to him. I think that next to the Bible and Wordsworth I love his writings most. An opportunity was once almost in my reach of meeting him, but I missed it. Many and many a night through years agone, have I sung myself asleep to his sweet music. On the long rainy and cold drive this morning of eighteen miles, from Bude, over windswept Cornish moors and lanes, I caught myself repeating—"Sunset and evening star," and just two nights ago, sitting on the rocks in that weird cave beneath Tintagel Castle, with the waves rolling up to my feet, I read on the very

spot which he selected as that to which Arthur came "from the great deep," his well-known words—"and then the two

> Dropt to the cave and watched the great sea fall,
> Wave after wave each mightier than the last."

'There too I read the last lines of the *Morte d'Arthur*, which I used to be able to repeat from beginning to end.

'Indeed it was the Arthurian legend in Tennyson that drew me to the Scilly Islands, the island of romance—all that now remains of the submerged and mysterious Lyonesse, and to Tintagel, to Bude and Bos, and it was Kingsley who drew me here. Nothing touches man like man.

'What Sir Walter did for the Trossachs, and for the Highlands generally, Tennyson has done for Cornwall, and Kingsley—both your father's friends—has done for the dismal Clovelly and the Devonshire shore: they have filled them with tourists to overflowing!

'Dismal Clovelly! Have you ever seen it?

'A village where it is because there was no place else to put it. A narrow rift or cleft, water-worn of course, in the steep and wooded slopes where North Devon drops abruptly down to the sea. Up this cleft, on either side of a narrow street of steps and stairs, rising from a tiny cave or harbour, and up which everything must be carried on the back of man, or of his born brother the ass, quaint houses have been dropped, the one above the other, by ancient and necessitous Devonian men.

'I have just been up to the rolling land above, and find it to be barometrically 500 feet above the sea on which I look as I write. It is close by and dull and dreary.

'I have no doubt that the place may be worth seeing in bright weather; but even then it owes all to one wizard pen.

'But Tintagel! There was no disappointment there. It was an "even down-pour" as we scrambled up and over that glorious peninsula. It is far grander and weirder than I anticipated. If Arthur was not born there, or brought there, he ought to have been, and hereafter I shall always believe that he was.

'God be praised, I always think of you as of one whose life has been consecrated, and whom one can leave without anxiety in the hollow of the Father's hand.

'I abused you heartily for going to Colonsay last year, and yet it seems you were led aright; and I am quite sure that it will be even so through every bright and dark day till you get beyond and behind the blue hills, where alone we may expect to get true and unbroken peace.

'I have been much impressed of late by the immense importance of holding perfectly loose by this life and firmly by the other, as the true secret both of happiness and usefulness; no one is so thoroughly able to enjoy life as those who hold lightly by it.'

From diary: '*Oct.* 19.—Home coming and Home bringing. Brothers and sisters at dinner. *Home.* Laus Deo.'

In this happy mood he settled down to his many activities. The new church was progressing, and the kirk-session unanimously resolved to go on with the towers in order to complete the building.

His visit to Balmoral was full of interest. The Queen was 'very gracious,' and his room was away from the clock. He appeared in all the appointed dress of the Moderator. Princess Louise commented on his appearance 'in his frills and things.' The Doctor bade her speak with more respect of his robes of office. As he left, the valet packed with his clothes a book belonging to the Castle. The Doctor sent it back to the Princess, saying it had been packed among his 'Frills and Things.'

At the close of the year Princess Louise wrote to him:

'*New Year*, 1892.

'DEAR "FRILLS AND THINGS,"—How kind of you remembering us at this time of the year, and sending us such kind wishes.

'Let me wish you all that is good, and every blessing on you, and health to enjoy them.

'When one wants to be cheery and bright, and bear the dark things of this world with right and proper resignation, one has but to think of the dear wearer of the "Frills and Things," and all seems easier, because he gives such an example to us all.

'Try and not think ill of me for being so free in thus

writing, to such a "High Dignitary," these thoughts.—Ever yours very sincerely, LOUISE AND LORNE.'

His hospitality was of the nature of 'the open door.' His company was always sought after, and if the hosts were so fortunate as to secure his presence there was the certainty of talk fast and furious, rising to uproarious merriment. In one of his speeches during the Assembly ceremonies, he said:

'There are few human beings who have more cause for gratitude to the gracious God of all than I have for the abounding mercies which have been showered upon my path, and not the least of them have been troops of generous and devoted friends in all classes of society, and almost in all parts of the English-speaking world. I can truly say that if I have any enemies, I do not know them, and certainly there is no being on earth to-day to whom I wish anything but good.'

His house in Cumin Place had been a pleasure to him. He planted new trees, and cultivated the mistletoe on those that were there. He loved its neighbourhood to Arthur's Seat, and he did not mind the long walk to his church.

No one was more sought after on the occasion of public dinners, and at one time probably no man attended more of these necessary functions. On one of these occasions he passed a slip of paper addressed to Mr. Charles Cooper, then editor of the *Scotsman*, and one of Dr. Mac Gregor's warmest friends. 'You have done many good services in your day. Abolish after-dinner speeches and you will be *immortal*.' The letter came back to him endorsed: 'It's all right. If you are hard up I always have a speech in my pocket. You had better be careful to-night, for I am going to have you reported, and I mean to write about you.'

It is a remarkable thing that, with all his readiness in speech, he rarely spoke without having written out the speech in shorthand, and in a writing which must always have been impossible to read at a glance. Probably, the mere act of writing impressed it on his retentive memory,

and the innumerable little books containing speeches on every conceivable occasion remain as the memorial of the extraordinary painstaking nature of all his work.

From his study, the room he loved best in all his houses, he wrote to one of his family who had become engaged :

'My dear sweet Niece,—You know that I own a thing that goes by the pretty name of Arbour ; and in that arbour when the days are bright the spring birds gather together and choose themselves mates : and such a pretty fuss and row they make about it, the little dears, pluming themselves, and showing off their fine feathers as brave as may be, and singing away like mad.

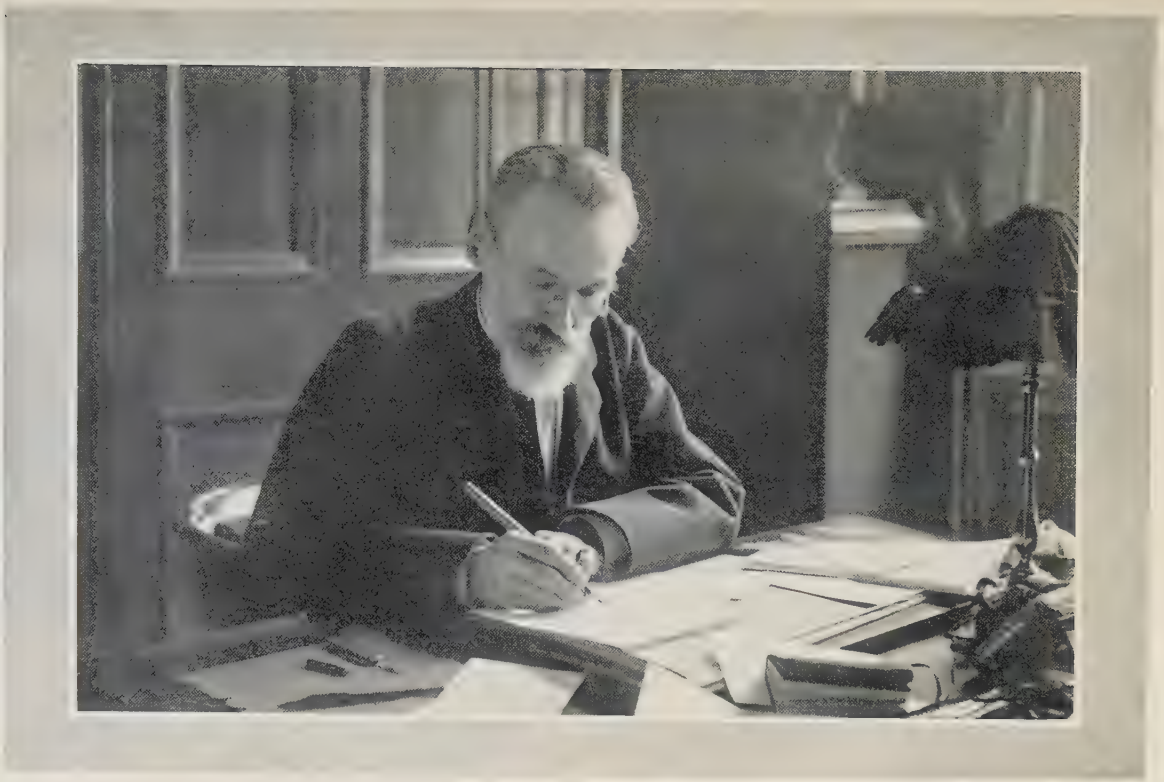
'Well, I can't help hearing their song, and putting down my pen for the very purpose in my grand new study, the like of which was never seen except in the *Arabian Nights*, although I forget if any of the great people there ever had a study, or ever needed one ; but all the same these little birds kept hammering away at a song which I thought I knew.

'Well, I listened and listened ever so long. Bless me, says I, what is that they are singing ? As sure as my name is not Robinson, as sure as my foot is on my native heath and my name is ——, they are saying ——. But no, I could not believe it. So I took up my pen again. There they were—at it again, whistling like to break their throats, "Fanny is to be married." Then said I, "God bless her, and the lucky dog who has got her, and make her as good and noble a wife as her own best of mothers, and may she make her husband's life as bright and as happy as her Aunt Helen made mine, and have as large a place in his heart, a place which will never be vacant for ever and for ever.—Yours ever, James Mac Gregor.'

With a central figure once more in his home, he set himself with fresh hospitality to see all his friends. Mrs. Mac Gregor received them as part of her life, and there was a perpetual flow of visitors through their doors.

His letters to his guests left no room for doubt as to the good things provided for their cheer :

'Beloved,—You can never, never, never come to this house amiss. The oftener you come the happier we shall



Dr. MacGregor in his Study

be, and there will always be a bed and a welcome from her and from me.

'I beg to say that I consider it as not far from an insult for you to ask, "Shall I?"

'I feel it all the more that I have been revelling for some days past in cockie-leekie, and mourning day after day that you were not here; a soul capable, as very few are, of entering into the profound and exquisite and indescribable and æsthetic satisfaction, which, alone of all edibles, cockie-leekie gives! Come at 12.20 for a good walk.'

A walk with him was an experience, and his companion had to be steeled against any feelings regarding attracting public attention. Every one knew the Doctor, but if a stranger passed him, the living vitality of his personality struck the most unobserving. Every one wanted a word with him; he recognised his friends afar off; they were loudly hailed, and introduced to his companion with appropriate biographical notes. If they belonged to the kirk-session, they were the best elders in the whole Church; if they were the women workers in his parish, they were virtuous above all other women. All would be admonished, chaffed, blessed, sent on their way, warmed in heart and hand.

Or, the Doctor would be observed engrossed in some street improvement, or the building of his own church. He would sample the metal on the road; hear how the pipes were made and laid, always imbibing practical knowledge at every pore, and totally oblivious that his experimental attitudes were attracting general interest. Each 'beautiful' view of Forth or crag, spire and rock, was more entrancing than the last. There was no plodding along the Meadows or the Queensferry Road beside that eager figure. Children could not escape the glance of his merry eyes. Many he knew by sight in his walks; others were the children's children of his early memories.

The special joke with the small friend was called out long before they met. The toy or garment which the Doctor said was his, was stoutly claimed and sturdily defended. His pockets produced threepenny bits, and the language of the nursery and his best fun was at their disposal, and

as those who companied with him turned to follow his road, there was always in his eyes the vision of 'angel faces.'

Writing to one of his pupils on the birth of a child he says:

'Bless the bonnie bairn and her mother and her father. May she grow just like your own dear self, and make all good and sweet and happy around her. When I look at the dear little face it sets me thinking of the days long ago, and of the bright ones waiting me on the other side.

'Would you believe it?—after all these long years—two little streams of tears run down my cheeks at this moment! Bless God, I was able to resign them without the faintest murmur or grudge.'

As this memoir was being written a letter was sent the biographer on Dr. Mac Gregor's character. It was from one who knew him as an old man:

'Dr. Mac Gregor could never have induced a melancholy, though his words were of hell fire, and of the saddest things. Vitality and energy are never anything but cheerful, and this is why there was always something of a distorted sublimity in his sermons when he became at all Calvinistic. What! those flashing and passionate eyes, creased in the wrinkles that mirth and an uproarious sense of humour had pinched together, how could they envisage doom of any sort? That sturdy head, splendid *amende* to the limbs' defect, was never meant to bear any burden but a shattering anxiety to make folk cheerful. I hope you have made him dominantly cheerful, full of the laughter of the gods.'

If Hamish Mac Gregor has revealed himself at all in these pages, he has not only the laughter of the gods, but the dominant note of victory, the joy of one who, walking through the valley of shadows, has seen morning spread upon the mountains.

His 'stirring address,' as his friend—Randall Davidson, then Bishop of Rochester—wrote, had been read and noted by those within and without the Church. In acknowledging its receipt one secretary addressed the envelope:

'The Rev. James Mac Gregor, D.D., Convener of the General Assembly, 22 Queen Street, Edinburgh.'

The envelope is neatly endorsed by the Moderator: 'This is from the chaplain of Bishop Thorold, and indicates his accurate acquaintance with the Church of Scotland.—J. Mac G.'

Words of gratitude and remembrance came from Dr. Marshall Lang: 'We miss you from our autumn Communion, but you are doing good work. I always have a lump in my throat as I hear the words, "Oh, spread Thy covering wings around."'

The General Election of 1892 had brought the Liberals again into power, and the defenders of the Church were looking out for those things which would strengthen the Church.

Dr. Mac Gregor was convinced that the union of the Churches was possible, and he felt if it could be achieved, the Liberationists would break their strength against impregnable walls of defence. He found it difficult to believe that the principles which took the Free Church into the wilderness had been abandoned by that Church. Events forced him to see that Rainy had adopted the position of the English Nonconformists.

During the election Professor W. P. Paterson wrote to him on the attitude of Mr. Ure, who was standing for West Perthshire:

'You will see that the Gladstonian candidate promises to do us no harm, if we should be in no danger, but to strike us if we should be down, in next Parliament. We should have two Resolutions, one declaring the position of conservation and reconstruction, with which you are so prominently identified.'

Lord Balfour of Burleigh was a faithful warder of Church interests from the conning-tower of Parliament. Writing in July 1893 to his colleague he says:

'I am convinced that we have now reached a stage in the movement against the Church, when it has become necessary

to put forth very great efforts to rouse our people for defence in their interests.

'There is a minority of the ministers and office-bearers of the Church who are apparently not convinced of the urgent necessity for action. In my opinion they can best be roused by the committee showing by *their* action that they are in earnest, by bringing pressure to bear upon those who are inert. At least two well-known and trusted ministers should be asked to give their time for six months or a year to the work of organisation.'

In 1894 he wrote again at the opening of Parliament:

'I cannot help thinking there is some new departure contemplated, but of what nature, and whether satisfactory in any way to us, I am not able to determine.

'The expression in the Queen's speech about "dealing with" Ecclesiastical Establishments in Wales and Scotland is very peculiar. To use the cant phrase of the day, it may mean either mending or ending. It is pretty clear that Wales has now distinctly got precedence, and it is equally certain that the measure in regard to Wales will not only be more drastic, but at least as difficult to carry through Parliament as the one affecting Scotland. If I rightly understand the expression used by Lord Rosebery in the House of Lords, he means to make a declaration of policy in Edinburgh. His words on that occasion will have to be carefully watched.

'The rumour here, which I give you for what it is worth, is to the effect that the agitation we have been conducting has not been without its effect upon the wire-pullers of the party, and if my information is correct, extreme civility of language towards us will be the order of the day.

'This seems to me not only not to minimise but actually to increase the danger of our position, and we must not forget that it is a very old device to speak words "smoother than butter while war is in the speaker's heart." I was prepared to press two points had I spoken on the speech from the Throne; first, the necessity, on account of the magnitude of the question, for a very distinct appeal to the people of Scotland upon it; and secondly, to point out that the retirement of Mr. Gladstone did not free the party from the pledges which he as their leader had given.'

Lord Balfour of Burleigh, writing of this period in Dr. Mac Gregor's life, says: 'Yes, we made him speak. Few had the faculty of "getting at" a Scottish audience as he had. It was not so much what he said, though that was good, but it was his manner and the evident sincerity with which he dealt with any subject that really interested him.'

As Joint Conveners of the General Assembly's Committee on Church Interests, many communications passed between Lord Balfour and Dr. Mac Gregor. Together they saw the ebbing tide of Liberationism leave the Church safe in the hands of the people. Only in 1904 did Dr. Mac Gregor give up this work of Church Defence. On an official paper he writes:

'*May* 31, 1904.

'This is the last intimation which will bear my name. On the 24th I intimated my resignation to Lord Balfour of Burleigh and to Sir William Menzies.'

In some notes he made on the Church of Scotland in the beginning of this second campaign of Defence, he says: 'As far as I can judge in Edinburgh, the Church of Scotland is looked on with friendly eyes by the working classes, whether they go to church or not. The old grudge against it as "Tory," which my father used to speak about, is gone, I believe.'

The attack on the National Church through the short Liberal Parliament was coupled with that on the Church in Wales. It was, as before, a vote-catching move. Other forces were at work, and the attack was never pressed home. The Church met it with organisation and leadership. Dr. Mac Gregor was 'let loose,' and spoke to a 'willing people.' The election of 1895 brought in the Unionist party for what proved to be eleven years of office, and the country was soon to be involved in the question of establishing its Empire rather than disestablishing the National Churches.

As the Defence work ceased, Professor W. P. Paterson, in a letter to Dr. Mac Gregor, put into words what the country owed to him: 'May you have many new years as good and useful as you have made the old ones. You will allow me to

repeat a conviction of mine, that it is less her committees and her schemes than the personalities of one or two of her ministers—in which group we all place you—which, in these latter days, has reinstated the old Church in the affections of the Scottish people. That you may long be spared, not only to defend, but to endear the Church to the people of Scotland is the New Year's wish to you.'

Along with the immense and successful meeting held against Disestablishment, Dr. Mac Gregor was constantly in conference with the Free Church on the question of Union. 'Charteris in the chair, Flint, Alison, Lang, Scott, Cheyne, and others. Took up subjects on paper by Thorburn and Calderwood. The last point "surrendering all relations with the State." I, Lang, Alison, and Charteris said "Certainly not."' In a further meeting 'to consider proposals of Calderwood, "Renounce the National Religion." No! No!' He records other conferences: 'Twelve on each side—nothing.'

In October of the same year the Doctor wrote to Lady Frances: 'I have just received, with gratitude to the Giver of All, the most fearless, masterly, and influential utterance ever given on the question of Scottish Disestablishment. We must see that Mr. Balfour's speech is circulated by hundreds and thousands.'

Lord Archibald Campbell wrote, urging him to greater efforts: 'Give no time to the enemy to fetch a breath! There is no Highlander better fitted than your good self to pass the Fiery Cross, and rally all who can be mustered in support of the old Church of Scotland, of our beloved land. I think I shall send you the Cross myself. It should be handed to two men starting in opposite directions. You will be one in Edinburgh, I will send the other to the Highlands. Bide a wee.' Fortunately for the cause, the blood-dipped, burning ensign was not at this time visibly passed from hand to hand.

'*Feb.* 13, 1893.

'DEAR PRINCESS LOUISE,—The kindly and beautiful Christmas remembrance which your Royal Highness sent me ought to have been acknowledged long ago. But you

are yourself too busy a person not to know that delay is no indication whatever of want of gratitude.

'I thought it awfully good of you to remember me.

'For good or for evil this day will be long remembered as that on which the Home Rule Bill was hatched.

'In all trials, personal or national, I find strength in the supreme conviction, "The Lord reigneth." God bless you, and spare you long to do kind things.—I am, dear Princess Louise, yours truly gratefully,

'JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

The return to the restored West Kirk meant a service of Dedication, which was in every sense one of thanksgiving for the senior minister. It was the fulfilment of many hopes, and if the labour had been immense, he knew it had not been in vain. He had asked A. K. H. B. to preach the sermon at the Dedication. Dr. Boyd answered: 'I am going to write a quite new sermon for the occasion: the very best I can do. I really think, "I will pull down my barns and build greater," would be a fit text.' The Doctor at once replied: 'I know you must speak in fun, but to prevent any mistake, I lose no time in saying that no text in the Bible could, in the circumstances, be more unfit. It has been the standing joke in Edinburgh for some months. I cannot for a moment hear that the text of that joke is to be the text of the first sermon to be preached in the new St. Cuthberts, and that its Dedication is to be solemnised by the unseemly laughter which it will be certain to create.' A. K. H. B. answered: 'My very dear old friend, of course it was a Gook. You shall have a text no one can laugh at, and a very serious treatment of what I feel a very solemn and affecting occasion. I looked into your church. A *vast* place. But they can't always have a preacher like you. I feel one should not joke in writing! Voice and look explain a thing when spoken.'

To this writer we owe an account of that great day:

'The consecration fell happily on his birthday, July 11, 1894. He was sixty-two, but looked about forty. No such occasion has been in Edinburgh, in connection with the Church of Scotland, in the memory of living man. It was

delightful to be under the dear Mac Gregor's roof. Blazing green was the lookout from my window, and the little party at dinner was of the men but for whom the new St. Cuthberts had never arisen. How happy they were in the success of a long and trying work. The great church could hold but a portion of the congregation which would fain have been there that day. More than a hundred clergy in their robes walked into church in procession. The magistrates in their official garb were there. Mac Gregor and Wallace Williamson were in their stalls at either corner of the great chancel. The dense mass of people was a thing to remember. None of us were quite sure how we should be heard in the great untried edifice. Feeble tones would be inaudible in a place so huge, but when Mac Gregor's telling and pathetic voice filled every corner as he read the opening sentences of Scripture, and the fine prayers of Dedication, it was felt that the question was settled. Both the ministers of St. Cuthberts appeared that day as men inspired.'

The services in 'dear and beautiful St. Cuthberts' were a perpetual joy to the minister. The stained-glass windows, as they were added, two by the gift of himself and his wife, were to him the perfection in design and colour. On the Christmas Day following the Dedication he wrote to Lady Mary in Kensington Vicarage:

'The best of all Holy Living lies in God revealing His Son in me. Without that, nothing: with that, all.

'Just starting for *our* Christmas service in our grand new church, compared to which yours is—nowhere! This to keep him and you humble.'

Some changes were made in the old order or disorder of the service. Gifts came to the church, and those who loved the ancient usages were perturbed. One secession from the kirk-session was threatened, and withdrawn at the entreaty of the ministers. 'Haystacks of letters, and fifteen folio pages of objections to Innovations,' marked the records of the period.

Dr. Mac Gregor had always been a leader of those changes in the service which meant a more decorous and beautiful

service. 'Frippery' and ceremonial formalism he never initiated, nor was he interested in it, but if he disliked offending the weaker brethren in the congregation, he never objected to those things which seemed to help his weaker brethren in the ministry in the order of services. The unimportant he never confounded with the important in Ritual. He was once told how in a church not his own he had shown the people, by raising his hands, how he thought they should stand up at a certain point in the service. The narrator solemnly ended, 'And they have stood ever since.' 'How tired they must be,' was the Doctor's comment.

His visit to Balmoral produced some comments on his own method in preaching. His friendship with Princess Beatrice, Prince Henry, and their family had grown closer with the years. Their children he loved, and he treasured their early signatures and little letters which they wrote him. Princess Beatrice told him that one of the children had asked what Dr. Mac Gregor was angry about when he knocked so hard on the book-board. Dr. Mac Gregor turned to Princess Ena and said, 'I was just telling you to be good till I come back.' Her brother instantly shouted, 'I *saw* you pointing at her and speaking to her.'

He had curtailed his sermons in the later part of his life, and in this visit—'The Queen sent me a special request by Miss M'Neill asking me to be short. Sermon nineteen minutes, whole service forty-three. The Queen spoke to me when we met out of doors, and said how much pleased she was with the sermon, asked after Mrs. Mac Gregor, and said she must come and see her.'

In the autumn of 1898 he met the Empress Frederick of Germany at Dalmeny. He gives a full account of what interested him deeply:

'*November.*

'Had an invitation from Lord Rosebery to dine with him to meet the Empress Frederick. But for my wife's wish and Dr. Bruce's approval I should at once have declined. I am glad, however, that I did not, as I was not a bit the worse of it. My neighbour, George Prothero, asked me a

day or two before if I were going, as we could drive out together, which we did. Lord Rosebery, looking bright and happy, introduced me to Lady Margaret, whom I took in to dinner. The Empress was on Lord Rosebery's right, Lord Crewe on his left. Ate next to nothing of the excellent dinner, splendidly served by gorgeous footmen, and drank hot water. The Empress chatted freely with her two companions. When the ladies retired Lord Rosebery signed to me to take the seat which the Empress vacated, and I did so. Talk, Books—Ritualism—Church of England. It was an immense pleasure talking to Lord Rosebery—he is clever! The Empress came up to me and said, "The Queen spoke to me about you." She then talked to me about her husband, who had been at Braemar and at San Remo.'

Before his ministry ceased he had to give up preaching in the evening, for the excitement was more than the frame could bear. The same thing applied to his life at home. There were evenings when it was expedient not to set him on his favourite occupation, repeating the poetry he knew by heart, and which touched the high-strung chords of his being. He was never a good sleeper, and the slightest emotion destroyed what chance he had of a restful night. He was possessed with the events of the day. There were those who thought he spoke too much on the affairs of the nation in the pulpit. If it had been possible to shut the preacher off from all knowledge of those affairs, it might have been possible to hear from him the discourse of a cloistered monk; but while he remained a citizen, a patriot, a preacher of the righteousness that exalteth a nation, it would have been as easy to check the flow of the Water of Leith beneath his window as to stop the expression of what he held as the truth.

When St. Cuthberts was finished he was engaged for some time in planting trees in the churchyard. To be 'aye sticking in a tree' was an injunction he followed closely, with a mind entirely engrossed in his occupation. It led to his preaching for two Sundays on 'The Trees of the Lord.'

Principal Sir William Muir, coming out of church one

Sunday, asked if Dr. Mac Gregor was through the wood yet?

When the South African war-clouds were gathering on the horizon, and this country was in temporary trouble with America, he preached a sermon on which he wrote the title, 'Venezuela, America, and Germany.' It was a sermon on national responsibility to God. 'Save now, I beseech Thee, O Lord, I beseech Thee, send now prosperity,' was the text. He touched on the horror of the mere idea of war between the two mightiest nations under heaven; between the two most Christian people the world has ever known, and these people brethren! War between the mother and the child. No greater calamity could befall our modern world. He went on to speak of our absolute loneliness and friendlessness among the nations, and glancing at the troubles in South Africa, he referred with intense feeling to the 'unworthy letter of the German Emperor to President Kruger.' The words were few; his indignation must have been as a kindling fire, for before the sentence had barely crossed his lips there was a movement, a sound of feet, and a low hoarse murmur of assent, which brought an instant sense to the preacher that he had roused the passions of men. With upheld hand and stilling voice he bade them 'for God's sake to sit quiet,' and in a moment he had them at peace. Lord Napier of Ettrick was present, and said he had seen nothing like it before; it was the way our forefathers showed their feelings. His was the magic of the orator, that indefinable quality which has ever swayed men, as the winds which pass and are gone. On no other occasion was there such an illustration of his unconscious power of impressing those who heard him.

In that sermon he told of our isolation among the Powers, and the Irish rejoicing at seeing the iron enter the soul of Great Britain. The iron of that war entered his own soul. In its first winter he was in Spain with Mrs. Mac Gregor. Often did he describe the sense that in our disasters there were no friendly eyes of sympathy looking on. He would speak of the reserve which it was necessary to preserve, of

the outpourings in prayer when alone with the thoughts of his country and God. As the months of warfare passed into years, he was absorbed in the destiny of our Empire. He felt one with the army in the siege, by the camp fire, and in the line of battle. Scotland's loss at Magersfontein and General Wauchope's death 'stunned and struck him dumb.' The blood of a warlike race was his, it was also that of the patriot. In the pulpit and in his pastorals to his people he exhorted them to stand by their country in faith and in works. Those who disliked his words from the pulpit could keep away, but nothing prevented him saying all that was in his heart; and the increasing crowds that heard him gladly through those sorrow-stricken days showed that his burning zeal, his belief in his country's cause, and his supplications for present help in the hour of adversity, were a comfort to many.

Will any of those who were gathered into the West Church the Sunday after the death of Queen Victoria forget the presence of the minister who mourned a friend as well as a Sovereign? We recall him as he stood before his people in the waiting hush of a great expectancy. We wondered if his voice would stand the strain of a transcendent emotion which showed in the tense mobility of his face. And, as we waited, the words which broke the silence rang with the note of courage as well as of the nation's life—'The Queen is dead. Long live the King!'

In 1897 the thirteenth centenary of St. Columba's death was commemorated in Iona Cathedral. The Duke of Argyll allowed the Church of Scotland to place a temporary roof over the choir, and services of praise and thanksgiving were held in the Gaelic and in English.

The sacred isle was filled with the pilgrims to the shrine of the great missionary. A great company of the ministers of the Church of Scotland came, and many took part in the services. Dr. Mac Gregor preached, after which the Holy Communion was administered in a church once again crowded with worshippers.

In his own vivid manner he gave the vision of the life of

the saint. Step by step he followed his way from the Port of Landing till the close of his mission, when from the Tor Abb, Columba gave his prophetic blessing to the mystic Isle. He had often visited the sacred spot, and lived again in thought and prayer with that wonderful community gathered in the ecclesiastical buildings of Iona. 'I preached with comfort and gladness,' he says, but his eyes were to see a yet brighter day in the story of the Scottish Church in Iona.

In autumn of 1899 he went on his usual visit to Inveraray. There the Duke told him that he had made up his mind concerning the destiny of Iona Cathedral and its group of historic buildings. In 1892 Dr. Mac Gregor and Principal Story had held various negotiations with the Duke, concerning proposals from a private individual to acquire the Cathedral for the National Church.

The Duke was unwilling at that time to give up his great responsibility into other hands, and he did not think the proposals made were of a practical nature. Throughout the Doctor had been an eager negotiator. To save the roofless Cathedral from wind and weather was, he thought, a duty, and he dreamt of her waste places being again made beautiful, and the ordinances held in the courts of the Lord's house. He had longed greatly that this earliest shrine of Scotland's Christianity should belong to the Church of the people.

The day had at length arrived, and the Duke unfolded to his friend the gift and Trust he intended to create.

In his diary the Doctor writes:

'This is the result of numerous appeals made for twenty-two years. The influence of many has been at work. He expressed gratitude for the whole Church, and wished for a complete settlement. The Duke earnestly and repeatedly hoped it would not be a failure. He has done it with his whole heart and soul to secure it for all time from the Church of Rome. He wishes it to be used for religious worship and to the glory of God. He is anxious that it should be restored in keeping with the style of the building, and the same stone used. The worship should be regular

at least in summer, and the services comely and beautiful. He hopes there will be no undue delay in the work, and that he may live to be present at the opening.'

Dr. Mac Gregor adds he has written at once to a great Scotsman, to see that a fund for the permanent endowment of the Cathedral shall at once be raised. 'It is an answer to faith and prayer,' he wrote to Lady Victoria, for this Trust, given to the Church of his fathers, gave him the desire of his heart.

CHAPTER XVI

A DIOS

1900-1910

'Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar
When I put out to sea.'

THE opening year of the century broke in darkness to him as it did to all the English-speaking world. 'Have entered on the New Year saddened at the condition of our much loved country in South Africa.' He was wintering in Spain, and feeling his exile from his country in such an hour, and from his work of ministering in his beloved St. Cuthberts. He knew he was about to lose one in whose companionship for twenty-five years he had found great happiness. George, Duke of Argyll, was lying in his last illness at Inveraray, and as he received the news of the prolonged suffering, he wrote his heart out to the friends who were 'a far cry' from him.

'*Xmas Day*, 1899.

'MY DEAR LADY VICTORIA,—I cannot let the day pass without sending you and those who are with you my warmest blessing. May the Christmas gladness be yours in richest abundance. I envy you the peace of your holy isle. Christmas is gripping Scotland tighter every year, bless God. May He give you His Holy guidance and support through all life's perplexing paths, till you get beyond the blue Hills.'

'I enclose you,' wrote one from Inveraray, 'a photograph of my father about the time you first knew him. Who could ever have forecast all the close friendship, all the ministry

and good companionship, all the love he and all of us have had for you? It is one of the great outstanding rocks which appear in every visionary landscape of the past. We have all of us cause to bless the day my father brought you into our lives.'

In his reply he said:

'*April* 1900.

'You must not repine. He would not have it so. It is all in better hands than ours, and not one featherweight of pain will be laid on him or you more than the great and all-wise and all-good Father knows to be for the best. It is one of the griefs of my absence that I am unable to be with you in this supreme moment of all your lives. He has never been long out of my thoughts. Morning and evening he has been borne in my heart at the throne of the Eternal, in whose gracious Hands we must leave the noble life He gave, and in whose Hands that life is safe for ever and ever.

'He is the greatest of living Scotsmen. I count him among the purest and truest Christian men I have ever known. I cannot think of him otherwise than associated with all that is highest or best. I never heard an unworthy word from his lips. He never wrote a word which, dying, he could regret.

'This is Good Friday. One glance at His Cross and the sufferings He bore—the infinite suffering, of which all the external adjuncts of the Cross and the bodily distress were but signs and symbols—is the best cure for our own bodily and mental and spiritual pain. God bless you, and spare the great life for great good.'

His thoughts were much with the Queen in all her heavy anxieties, and he wrote to Princess Henry of Battenberg that she might convey to her his dutiful remembrance.

'Madeira, *April* 1900.

'Dear Princess Henry of Battenberg,—We are due to leave Madeira to-day, after an absence of six months passed in Spain, Gibraltar, Tangier, Grand Canary, and here.

'They have been among the most anxious months of the Queen's long and chequered reign, and their burden must have been very heavy to bear.

'I cannot leave without saying that near as she has always

been to the hearts of her people, she was never nearer them than now.

'Through the long agony, the prayers of millions of loyal hearts have been rising, night and day, for blessing and help to her brave sailors and soldiers at the seat of war. There never has been nor could be any doubt as to how, with God's blessing, the struggle would end; nor that its results for the good of Boer as well as Briton, of South Africa and the whole Empire, would be worth the cost, heavy though it has been and may yet be. It will prove a blessing in disguise. Not one brave life, I am satisfied, has fallen in vain. I have been grieved and ashamed at the whimpering, fault-finding, yelping tone of some of our ablest newspapers, and proud that our *Scotsman* has preserved throughout a wise, hopeful, and dignified attitude. My friend, its Editor, Mr. Cooper, is with us here.

'Our latest newspapers rejoiced us with the news of the glorious welcome which Her Majesty has received from her warm-hearted Irish subjects.

'Nothing could have gone straighter to their hearts than her kindly and gracious act with regard to the shamrock, and still more her seasonable visit which, let us hope and pray, may be the beginning of a brighter and happier day for Ireland. She is now, I trust, safely back in London and none the worse of the fatigue. God bless and keep her.—Your obedient servant, JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

In 1901 his life was again full of bereavements, which he felt acutely. The death of Queen Victoria fell heavily on his private feelings, and he felt the strain of the great service of Commemoration which was held in St. Cuthberts. The war had touched many of those he loved among his people, and though he had a firm conviction that the soldier dying in defence of his country and in the call of duty 'was safe in the hands of Him who gave the love of country,' he knew that there were around him hearts he could do little to comfort. His brother Malcolm, one who was very dear to him in his family, died after an illness of great suffering patiently borne. The two brothers were much together through the last days. 'I see Malcolm every day. He is calm, trusting in Christ. Everybody loves him.' Writing to a friend he said, 'I dream that I told you that his death

was to me an ideal one, the gentlest and tenderest leave-taking I have ever known.'

He was very unfit for all he went through, as he was suffering from an illness, the cause of which was not soon discovered. In August he had to undergo an operation for stone. Illness of any kind told heavily on his nervous system, and he had little belief that he would survive the crisis of his complaint. He left his affairs in absolute order, and wrote down his creed the night before he was in the hands of the surgeons:

'*August* 2, 1901.

'In the event, not impossible at my age, of a fatal issue of the coming surgical operation, I desire to express the perfect calmness and equanimity with which, through God's grace, I anticipate that operation and, if it be His will, that fatal issue. The faith, which I have preached to others, has not failed me. I bless God that all through my ministry I have been enabled to preach, without the shadow of a serious doubt, that Catholic Faith which was once delivered to the saints—faith in the blessed Trinity, in God as my Father, in the Lord Jesus Christ, God's Eternal and Incarnate Son as my Saviour, Prophet, Priest, and King, and in the Holy Ghost, my Sanctifier and Comforter.

'Among many undeserved blessings for which I have cause to praise my Maker, I reckon as the highest that I have been honoured, under a deep and abiding sense of great unworthiness, to preach that faith, humbly but earnestly, to my fellow-men. I have never, I think, entered the pulpit without a deep sense of responsibility, and yet the happiest moments of my life have been spent there, preaching to my own people.

'My last thoughts are with the members of St. Cuthberts, the workers, the elders, the assistants, the missionaries, and with my colleague. I am full of gratitude to them for their unbroken kindness and forbearance. My prayer is that they may all know Jesus Christ for themselves as their own, their only, their all-sufficient Saviour; love Him and keep His commandments. I commend them to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build them up and give them an inheritance among all them that are sanctified.

'Among the mercies of my later life the best has been my

dearly beloved wife, God's good gift to me—my true and able helpmeet in my public as well as my private duties. The Lord reward her for all she has been to me.

'I die in the Catholic Faith and at peace with all men, committing my soul to my Saviour as a poor, unworthy sinner, looking for mercy at the hands of God to His infinite merits alone. I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.

'JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

Later in the year he had a second attack and was very ill, but recovered without any further operation. From Crieff he wrote an account of his condition to Lady Victoria:

'*Oct.* 30, 1901.

'DEARLY BELOVED,—I am eagerly but timorously looking forward to next Communion in November, hoping that I may be able to be present and take some part in the service. The gentle but implacable Dr. Bruce forbade my participating at the last in St. Cuthberts in July, and I have been only once inside a church door since.

'On Monday I became mortally ill, whether due to a chill I don't know. Deliverance after torture came on Tuesday, and I have been in the doctor's hands ever since. These things do not come by chance. We spent three delightful weeks with our friend, Miss M'Nab, at her place, Blackruthven. Her kindness was beyond words. Delightful, restful, healing weeks, for which I am grateful to the Giver of All. I can now walk my three miles.

'We shall get *home* after close on two months' absence from Auld Reekie.

'I have had the closest communion I have ever had with the Master in being made, as you were when young, "a partaker of His sufferings." That communion left its indelible mark upon you, as your life shows.

'My dear, dear Vicar, Dr. Mitford Mitchell, who would have done my work for me, was laid down at the same time as his Bishop, and is now very slowly recovering at Eastbourne. Dr. Marshall, however, has returned from Australia, and if I am still *hors de combat* will take my place at and after the Communion. I am in God's hands and am content to remain there.

'Thank you for your delicious, dreamy letter, with its far-away look into the past. Never mind Mr. C——'s leap into darkness. Remember my aphorism: "It taks a' kinds o' queer craturs to mak' a warld." There is a twist somewhere in all such people.

'Take care not to overdo it. That is your danger and temptation. "We must not wind ourselves too high, for sinful man beneath the sky."

'If God spare and strengthen me, my first sermon will be on "Suffering," and the good of it. I meant to preach on that in August, but God had other work for me to do. A thousand blessings.

'JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

To the Bishop of Peterborough:

'WISTON, LAMINGTON, *July* 20, 1901.

'DEAR BISHOP,—I am here seeking health in one of the most beautiful spots in my beautiful country, right beneath Tinto, the highest point of Lanarkshire, and in the house of our friend Mrs. M^cLaren, who has lost a son in the war. In her wide knowledge of literature your spouse has no doubt come across the touching lines concerning "Tinto Tap."

'I have read through and through with great care your first charge, and I pray that you may be spared to give very many more.

'I shall bind it with best morocco, and give it an honoured place in my library beside the charges of Thorold and Davidson.

'What you say about the poor livings of £45 a year shocks me. Our Church aims at a minimum stipend of £200. The laity should get no rest night or day—their own lives should be made unbearable till they have remedied this state of things. Stir up your brother bishops to howl about it. They can do it if they like.

'I have noted what you say (for personal use, sometime) about Sunday observance, church attendance, Christian fellowship, games, gambling, and many other things. I have read the debate in the *Guardian* on the Athanasian Creed. His dying father said to Professor Charteris, "Make the door as wide as you can."'

To a friend :

'*Nov.* 1901.

'Our great church meeting is to-night in Glasgow, and I think it not unlikely that you will be there. Poor wreck that I am, I can only pray for it, yet I have learnt that prayer goes far.

'God bless you, dear friend of long ago, and friend for the *here* and for the *there*. I am never dull, but a lump comes to the throat when I sign myself—Yours,

'JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

His long ministry, always with the exception of Monimail, in charges with large populations, meant that he had a great number of the younger ministers of the Church as his assistants. The position of a subordinate has always its difficulties in any profession, but Dr. Mac Gregor had the happy gift of remembering that he himself had been young, or more truly, he could never grow old at heart, and his encouragement to those who worked with him, in any capacity, was always heart-whole. The assistants were to him all 'swans' as soon as they were connected with him or his church. If they preached moderately, their gifts were discerned by the minister, sometimes before the congregation had learnt to see any outstanding merits.

'He was with me, and in St. Cuthberts,' he would say with much glee, as he watched the progress of these ministers to important charges, which very often his words of generous recommendation had helped to procure for them.

'He was a second father to me,' wrote one after his death, and the words will find an echo from many a son of his old age, and among the ministers of the Church of Scotland.

In one matter alone was he stern to them and to others—that was, their orthodoxy in the faith. If their preaching did not contain the full doctrine of the Gospel of Christ, they never found themselves connected with him or the church where he was minister.

One illustration shows his sensitiveness to any failure to satisfy him in matters which he thought all-important. A young licentiate wished to become his assistant and, as

usual, conducted a service and preached. Dr. Mac Gregor was present, and it was obvious to those who were with him that he was not satisfied. He wrote to the candidate:

'Your conduct of the service was everything I could desire. You will therefore understand my great sorrow that the sermon, though able, somewhat disappointed me; and you will also quite understand why I think it fair to us both frankly to say so. The occasion was the thanksgiving service after Communion. I would have liked a sermon with more of the Gospel in it, more of the Saviour and His work for sinners. There can be nothing more foolish than to judge of a man's religious views from a single sermon. I do not so judge you. It would be a relief to me to have your own personal assurance that you hold firmly by and will ever faithfully preach the doctrines of the true and eternal Godhead of the Lord Jesus Christ, of His Incarnation, of the Atoning efficacy of His death, of His Resurrection and Ascension to God's right Hand.

'From all I saw and have heard of you, I am perfectly certain that I shall find you helpful and loyal, and that you will be very happy and useful in St. Cuthberts.'

The answer he received was as frank and honest as his own letter:

'It is not that I disbelieve in the doctrines of the true and eternal Godhead of the Lord Jesus Christ, but I feel that these doctrines are not to me the personal power and incentive which they are to others. Hence, my sermons are deficient in positive Gospel teaching.'

The Doctor wrote at once. He said he believed these doubts were common to earnest and genuine natures. With God's blessing they would pass, and the truth and reality of religion be all the clearer for the struggle. But, leaving the individual, he was responsible for the souls of his people. 'How can a man preach a Gospel he himself does not feel? Not a day passes without one of my congregation dying. What message of comfort would you bear to their dying hearts?' The responsibility he could not undertake, and the appointment was not made.

To the men who worked with him and shared his great faith and courageous outlook on the troubled sea of modern thought, he was very literally their comrade-in-arms. He trusted his colleagues, and loved them because they were associated with him 'in the greatest of all privileges, the preaching of the Gospel.' He followed them all as they went forth to their appointed stations. 'Be good to him. He is your minister, and was with me, and must be your friend,' he would write to those he knew in the parishes where their work lay.

He never forgot the exiled Scot, and in the years when the Church of Scotland was in what seemed almost hopeless difficulties in London, he came again and again to her aid by personal work and influence. As he had helped the Kirk of the Crown of Scotland in 1881, so he did nearly thirty years later when the ancient landmark was raised anew with Stones of Remembrance.

When, by the retirement of the Rev. Dr. Donald Macleod, the charge of St. Columba's became vacant, and the Rev. Archibald Fleming was unanimously called away from the Tron Church in Edinburgh to fill it, he followed him in thought to his new work, and, under pain of his severest displeasure, charged all he knew in London to receive him cordially. 'My assistant in St. Cuthberts, my successor in the Tron,' was a passport which the congregation did well to countersign.

'*Feb.* 1902.

'DEAR LADY FRANCES,—I have been hunting in the *Scotsman* for an account of your day's proceedings at St. Columba's, and have at last detected a shabby little notice which they have stuck in at the very end of their public news. I have no doubt such monitions as you gave to your new minister would be kindly and salutary. You will all be deeply in love with him and with her before many months go by.

'I wish you were sitting in my seat at this moment. Your Highland eyes and head and heart would be fascinated by the sight. The valley of the Leith is in snow. Down in the valley and between me and Moray Place are vast

masses of gulls, driven in by stress of weather and hunger, wheeling and whirling as they only can.

'I stand and glower at them till I am tired. It is an annual panorama which never fails to give intense delight. Mary Millar puts out bread, which they eat right in front of my window. It is a bit of Inveraray brought to Eton Terrace.

'How your father would have revelled in the sight! I have been reading Mr. Balfour's introductory speech in connection with the new Rules of Procedure. The cleverness, the humour, the power of it, and the reception it got, all moved me. A silent prayer of thankfulness went up to the Throne of Grace. On many and many a day I have prayed for him and Lord Salisbury and Mr. Chamberlain by *name*, morning and night—asking for them from the Father of Lights, the wisdom, the guidance, the firmness which they need under trying circumstances, and which He alone can give.

'I had a letter from Lord Wemyss telling me that he had quoted in the House of Lords from my Pastoral some "eloquent words," which I had at the moment quite forgotten, and I thought that he meant a letter which I had marked "private," and in which I had abused a certain Scotsman, the only human being whom I can think of who ever awakened within me a feeling of unconquerable repulsion. Lord Wemyss is evidently pleased. He sent me last night a brace of pheasants!

'Clouds of gulls are fluttering down. I close this letter by my window. Dr. Bruce has just been here and orders me to Cannes first and then to Algeciras. God bless you and give you His grace.'

'*Nov.* 1902.

'When I heard that Fleming was down again, I could have cried for him and for you and your church. Every one is eager to fill St. Columba's—Dr. Scott and Dr. Mitford Mitchell. There will be no difficulty in keeping the pot boiling. I would go gladly but dare not.

'If he would only curb that inborn, diseased, and insatiable desire for excessive and unceasing work there would be no fear of him!'

In 1895 Cumin Place had been given up for the house in Eton Terrace. 'We shall be happy anywhere together,'

Dr. MacGregor in Rose Garden at Millersneuk Farm. September, 1910

the Doctor wrote in his diary, and he soon transferred the title of 'the best house in Edinburgh' to his new abode. The valley of the river was to him an unending joy, and that the Water of Leith had been freed from pollution, and trout could be seen in its running waters, delighted the soul of the fisherman.

His life settled down into a carefully ordered routine, the object of all his care and thought being his desire to be fit for preaching. He believed as he had done from the beginning of his ministry that it was the appointed way for the salvation of souls, and as he felt that the span of his life here was nearing its close, he grew the more ardent to preach the Faith that was in him.

Influenza was his chief enemy, and it laid him low for long periods of time. He was often compelled to go abroad for part of the spring, never unwilling to depart, but always longing to be back among his people. Travel had been his second nature, and the roving instincts of the landless Mac Gregors were, to the last days, strongly developed in this son of their race. Far journeys had always been his delight, and now that he had found in his wife a kindred spirit, and one who relieved him of all the pains and penalties of a journey, he was more than content. 'She is the best of women and the most admirable traveller, always helpful and happy. I call her "the dear Born Tramp."'

'We missed him from the accustomed way' in these seasons of absence. Those who knew his habits could meet him, punctual as the clock, walking in the morning along the Queensferry Road with his dog, 'Brainless Bobs,' or sunning himself in Belgrave Crescent, which he called his 'Riviera.' As the dawning flush of spring touched the trees of his garden valley, his eyes were the first to note 'the miracle of resurrection,' and when 'the gladness of the May' brought the full glory of foliage and blossom, he would stand on the Dean Bridge looking down on 'the garden of the Lord,' and lifting his eyes to the blue hills beyond the sea, he would call for thanksgiving for 'God's beautiful world.'

There were hours when he was a sure find at home, and as certainly as he was found so did he extend the warm welcome. 'The best broth, made by the best cook in Edinburgh, was waiting them. What more can man want?' His morning studies, usually in foreign tongues, were explained, or perhaps his quick sympathy noted that there was some budget to be unfolded to him. He threw himself, heart and soul, into the minutest trouble or joy of any of his friends. Advice he gave, and he expected it to be taken. Trouble he would take on their behalf, but if he thought the recipient made his labour in vain, the faults and weaknesses got short shrift. 'Self-help,' material and spiritual, was his doctrine, and the lazy and unbelieving were not wont to seek his aid and counsel.

It would be difficult to give any detailed accounts of his friends. There are many living who know the place he filled in their affections, and that no other friend had quite the same position.

Louisa, Lady Ashburton, and her daughter, Maysie, who afterwards married Lord William Compton, were among his greatest friends. In the later years of his life he visited them, after they had become Lord and Lady Northampton, at Castle Ashby. He revelled in the glories of their new home and its beautiful chase, as he had done in the sequestered peace of Compton Wynyates. There, vested in a white surplice, he had preached in Brailes Parish Church.

Lady Ashburton gave him a large sum to the rebuilding of St. Cuthberts, for she well understood that it was at that time the absorbing care of the friend she called her 'dearly beloved Doctor.' Their correspondence was close and intimate, and when her death ended a tie very dear to him, he wrote to one who had told him of the end:

'ALHAMBRA, GRANADA, *April* 1903.

'It was like you sending the touching account of the last hours of our dear friend, Louisa, Lady Ashburton. She was a remarkable woman. We shall never see her like again. Such a combination of heterogeneous qualities rarely,

if ever, found a lodgment in the same human heart. She was a gifted creature, simple as a child, with high ideals, a lover of literature and science, a lover of art, an intense lover of Nature, and of the God of Nature and His Son, Jesus Christ. She was unworldly to an extreme degree. Her dear face was singularly beautiful. I would love her, were it for nothing else, that she was the mother of Maysie. In spite of the glorious weather of southern Spain we have both had a poor time of it. Influenza caught on board the *Himalaya* sent me straight to bed on the moment of arrival and reduced my small bulk terribly, leaving me so weak that even yet I am incapable of anything like physical exertion. My sole literary occupation has been finishing the compilation of a book of useful Spanish phrases gathered from newspapers and books on conversation and grammars which, in addition to the pleasure it has given me, has been very useful.

'Reading the Spanish newspapers and the *Scotsman* brings out the enormous contrast between the two.

'The leading article in the former has the appearance of being written by a boy fresh from a High School, and the style is the rowdy-dow. A sentence with ninety words or more is common. Last year I noted in a speech of the poet-orator, Canalejas, reported in the *Herald* of Madrid, two hundred and nine words, counted by myself. To-morrow, Sunday, is the voting day for a new Cortes. The towns will vote republican, but the Cortes will be so manipulated that the present Government will stay in.'

'*January* 1, 1903.

'DEAR PRINCESS LOUISE,—My first letter in 1903 is to wish for Your Royal Highness and the Duke, what I have wished in a better form this morning already, all that is best through this and all future years, and especially, if you will pardon the liberty, for your own beloved self, a larger measure of that greatest of earthly blessings—the blessing of health.

'Long ago you both won my warmest affection, and no earthly change will ever alter it. May the everlasting arms be around you both now and evermore.—I am your affectionate and devoted servant,

'JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

To Lady Victoria :

'*Jan.* 2, 1904.

'My dear Bairn in the Faith,—Your letter is lying before me, and renews my thankfulness that you landed safely, through that storm, at Tiree. Do take care of yourself. Curb your Highland and Campbell fearlessness and rashness, and don't get drowned unnecessarily. Indolence, indolence, always indolence, bodily and mental, is the best medicine which I can prescribe for you.

'You have learned long ago, in the hardest of all schools, the school of suffering, and I fancy you are learning more and more every day, that life is not by any means a bed of roses, but a very serious thing indeed. Nothing will more help us to be brave and patient and strong-hearted and single-minded than the growing consciousness of our oneness with Him "who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief"—the conviction that it is an honour to be permitted to enter into the fellowship of His sufferings and to take up His Cross and carry it where He points the way.

'We had a great congregation on Sunday—amongst them dear Sir William Muir and ten of his children and grandchildren. I give you my text for your motto for 1904, which I shall try to remember every morning throughout the year. Philip. iv. 19.

'Remember that when St. Paul wrote the words he was a prisoner at Rome, waiting his trial before the Supreme Court of the Empire, on a capital charge. Nothing makes life so glad and happy and strong as being able to leave it entirely in God's hands, ever through Christ.

'In your lonely island home you are not forgotton. God bless you and your work.'

The aftermath of the war in South Africa filled his thoughts, which were always as much at home in the colonies as in his own land. His intense belief that the war was one of necessity, and made in the cause of freedom, was only equalled by his passionate desire that the fruits should be a Government, stable and free, in a colony where the arts of peace might follow those of war. He trusted the statesmen at home, and was always hot in defence of their actions if he heard them criticised.

'*Feb.* 27, 1904.

'My conviction strengthens that Whiggism of the rankest kind is in your blood, and that you can no more help it than you could alter the colour of your hair.

'Apart from the right and the wrong of sending Chinamen to S. Africa, "slavery" is an utter misnomer for the act. Slavery is the obligation to labour for a master without the consent of the servant; the establishment of the right in law which makes one person absolute master of the body and the service of another. To say that is what the Government has agreed to do is nonsense.'

In 1905 Parliament had to deal with the dispute between the non-Established Churches in Scotland. The now famous judgment of the Court of Appeal in the House of Lords is not part of this history. In the legislation consequent on that judgment, the Church of Scotland was enabled, by what was familiarly called 'Clause V.,' to make her own Formula of Subscription to the Standards of the Church. It raised considerable opposition in those who represented the Church as fettered in her liberties by the State, and yet did not wish to see her freed from even the outward appearance of spiritual 'bondage.' He was not able to do more than 'watch and pray' from afar, but that he did with keen interest.

'*June* 14, 1905.

'After a very late breakfast and the supplication which followed it for guidance to the Government in Church matters, the first letter I read was yours. On Saturday I accidentally met the Lord Advocate, and he asked if I thought it would be advisable to have public meetings in support of our Clause. My advice was "No. You could not get adequate meetings just now anywhere."

'What seems possible would be a monster petition from almost every kirk-session of the Church, representing the feelings of our laity as well as clergy. If it could be done, and it might be tried, it would be helpful.'

He wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury on his letter, offering his services in the crisis to the Disruption Churches. To him, the Archbishop answered :

'Your letter is cheering and helpful as always. Would to God I were able to be of any real use to the distracted and bewildered controversialists in the non-Established Scottish Churches. I trust that, as you say, my endeavour can do no harm if it does no practical good.'

'*January* 1, 1906.

'My dear Archbishop,—My first letter of the year I write to wish your dear wife, yourself, and your great Church, God's wise guiding and richest blessing during 1906. It is like to prove a troublesome year to both our National Churches. As if the Churches had not had enough of fighting, the Disestablishment Committee are doing their best to stir up the people and the Government to put an end to our Church as a National Church. Your Church in Wales is in the same category.

'I was very much struck with your wise and timely remarks on voting at the election, and all the more that in yesterday's sermon I said, "We are on the eve of what, I fear, will be a hot election. The pulpit has nothing to do with politics, but it has to do with prayer. It is not only my right but my duty to say, that one of the most solemn functions of a British citizen is voting for a Member of Parliament. If we need divine guidance in anything we need it there. Let us pray for that guiding for ourselves and others."

'I alluded to the wise counsel which you gave to your clergy in the matter of Foreign Missions. In our dear Church we are trying to stir up more of the missionary feeling and liberality.—Yours truly,

'James Mac Gregor.'

To a friend :

'*February* 26, 1906.

'On the last day of last year I conducted worship in St. Cuthberts, and after service went straight off to bed, and practically kept there the whole month of January, suffering from a severe attack of influenza. That terrible disease seems determined to take me away, and so be it, if that is God's will. There could be many harder ways of dying: but bless His name that is no business of ours. It is in His infinitely wiser and better Hands. On three Sundays running I have had, what to me is life's chief joy, the privilege of preaching the glorious Gospel of the Grace of God. For

five Sundays I have preached from Ephesians ii. 8-10. Read that wonderful passage, unique almost in the Bible, with its extraordinary antinomies, and commit it to memory.'

In 1906 he completed the fiftieth year of his ministry, and his jubilee was kept by his congregation with every mark of devoted affection. Sir James Balfour Paul, Lyon King of Arms, and son of his predecessor, the Rev. Dr. Paul, spoke the principal words of congratulation. He noted how three of the previous ministers of St. Cuthberts had kept their jubilee, 'and curiously enough they had all died the same number of years after celebrating it.' There was some laughter at this point, and Dr. Mac Gregor called out readily, 'I have no fear.'

In Sir James' survey of the long life and service of the senior minister, he retold the story of the gifts and genius which had been devoted to the Church. The congregation would have liked to make some personal offering to mark the event, but Dr. Mac Gregor chose that it should be dedicated to the further adornment of the Church of St. Cuthbert. To him the crowning festival was the day on which he kept the autumn Communion, and he stood, his heart filled with a great thanksgiving, with his colleague beside him, ministering in the preaching of the Word and the breaking of bread, yet again to his people.

Every gift which enhanced the beauty and dignity of St. Cuthberts was an added joy in his life. All that went to make them devout and beautiful was added to the services. The 'Te Deum' and the Apostles' Creed had long been made part of the regular ritual in the church. To him the 'Te Deum' was the greatest of all human acts of adoration, and those who saw his attitude as the great hymn was sung to some tune in which the people could join, realised how to him it was the homage of his lips touched with the fire of his perfervid faith. 'Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ. Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father.' These words, he would say, came to him with an ever fresh emotion, and the renewed realisation of their inspired truth.

The Rev. Dr. William Blair, Dunblane, one of the few survivors to-day of his early youth, wrote to him:

'I hear your jubilee is to be celebrated. I matriculated in 1846, and you did in 1847, but we ran in harness together in several classes at St. Andrews. I never can realise you as other than you were fifty-nine years ago, when you came up to College clothed in an Eton jacket, with a real Glengarry bonnet on your head. I know that photographs picture you as grey and venerable as, no doubt, you are. But to me you are and ever shall be the vivacious youth, bright and cheery in yourself, and diffusing brightness and cheerfulness wherever you came. God has given you many a rich blessing, and crowned you with many crowns of honour from your fellow-men.'

'EDINBURGH, *May* 1906.

'MY DEAR LADY MARY,—On the 11th June, *Deo volente*, my wife and I leave Auld Reekie *en route* for Guernsey to be the guests for some time of my old friend, General Campbell, the Governor thereof. My heart feels sore at the thought of passing Peterborough without a blink of the dear Bishop and his dear wife. Could you take us in for a night?

'This is Assembly time. I was present at the opening. I cannot conceive a more august, sacred, and solemn ceremonial. It was much more touching to me than when I was one of the two chief performers—a most striking emblem of the Divine Union between Church and State, of which we can say, "Whom God hath joined together let not man put asunder."

'Our house is full, and my wife accordingly in the highest spirits. We have a Professor and his wife all the way from Winnipeg, a prolific author.

'Thanks for recalling those glorious days which stand out as the happiest in a happy life.

'That Western coast seen from the S.S. *Columba* is unrivalled on the earth. Its charm was he who is here no more. We shall see him again.

> '"Let no proud stone with sculptured virtue rise,
> To mark the spot wherein a sinner lies:
> But if some boast must mark the sinner's grave,
> Boast of His love who died lost man to save."

'Do these words call up any memories?

'JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

'GUERNSEY, *June* 1906.

'DEAR LADY MARY,—We are back from a good service in the military church here. A young missioner preached a useful sermon.

'We had a smooth passage, but it poured without intermission.

'The house is almost as quaint and intricate, and with as many passages and doors as the palace of Peterborough. I am always losing myself. It is surrounded by extensive gardens with a vegetation which looks tropical. There are Japanese temples and fountains all about, within the walls which enclose beautiful Saumarez Park.

'I am quite sure that the visit here will complete the convalescence which you began, and that I shall, with God's blessing, return better than I have been for a long time. His Grace the Lord High Commissioner, Lord Colebrooke, is doing splendidly—for a Liberal!!'

'*Dec.* 6, 1906.

'MY DEAR MR. DUNCAN,—It may be a fad, but it is a fact, that I have always disliked letters of *printed thanks* for sympathy or for congratulations; they find their way at once into the waste-paper basket. I do not like to give what I do not like to get. You have thus, along with other friends, my excuse for delay in thanking you for your kind letter congratulating me on the completion of fifty years of my ministry.

'Your father and I entered college the same year, and were licensed by the same Presbytery, on the same day, to preach the everlasting Gospel. Our lot in life, for a long time, lay far apart: but the friendship of our youth remained to the end. I saw a great deal of him when he was here in Edinburgh, and was much impressed by his intense devotion to His divine Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. Were he here to-day, he would be as keenly pained as I am at the drift, in certain quarters, towards rank Unitarianism.

'I am sure that you will follow in your father's footsteps, and, like him, "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the Saints." You have a great work before you in our dear Church and land, and much is expected of you: God guide and bless and strengthen you to do it.

'Come and see us when next in Edinburgh.—Yours truly,

'JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

His interests and affections were as world-wide as ever, as his correspondence in these closing years reveals. To his people he spoke in the pulpit and in the pages of *Life and Work*.

His political opinions were strongly with the Tariff Reformers; very largely because he believed in the party which were now making Fiscal Reform their political creed, and he dreaded disappointing the colonies.

To a little friend of six:

'3 Eton Terrace, *Dec.* 24, 1906.

'My dear Anthony,—I write for the first time in my life with an india-rubber pen. At this moment my wife tells me it is gutta-percha. Whether it is the one or the other, it carries ink enough to thank you for the dear and admirable likeness of your own dear self. Your old friend will take great care of it, and place it among his treasures. I am the old friend, and I hope that you will live to see as many years as I have seen, and be as cheery and happy as I am.

'The one sure way to be happy and cheery is to love Him who was born on Christmas Day in Bethlehem, which I once saw, and try to be good and kind as He was. I am sure that He wants you to be a good and a great man.

'I wish you all a merry Christmas and many of them.

'James Mac Gregor.'

'*Dec.* 1907.

'Dear Dr. Fisher,—I cannot resist congratulating you on the splendid programme for the *Life and Work* of 1908, thanking you for it, and wishing it and you the success which you deserve. I never mention it to my people or other people without saying, what I believe, that it is the best penny magazine which I know, and the best, I think, in Great Britain.'

'*Dec.* 1907.

'My dear Lord Wemyss,—I am not only gratified but proud to be remembered by your Lordship, a patriotic and heroic Scotsman of a type which, if not dying out, is certainly not increasing. There are so many things which make old men, like you and myself, anxious about that

future which neither of us will see. May He who measures our days spare you long to be the honour and the blessing of your native land. Wishing you and yours a cheery Christmas and a happy New Year and many of them.—I am, yours truly, JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

'EDINBURGH, *Dec.* 31, 1907.

'MY DEAR MR. CROIL,—It was wise of you to dedicate your book to the Archbishop of Canterbury. I have known him almost since a boy. His father often worshipped in St. Cuthberts Church. I gave the prayer when his dear mother was laid in her coffin. I wish every Bishop in England had his sound sense and his evangelical views.

'God bless and spare you long to do good service to your Church in Montreal and elsewhere.—Yours truly,

'JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

The treatment of the Scottish Presbyterians by the Bishops in India exercised his mind, as it did all those who cared for the Scottish regiments. He wrote to the Bishop of Peterborough, whose answer was in another spirit from that which was evident among the ecclesiastics elsewhere.

A correspondent, at the same date, wrote and asked if an English priest was right in saying to her 'that no minister of the Scottish Church had any right to administer the Holy Sacrament, as there are only three branches of the Church which are descended from the Apostolic faith, viz., the Greek, the English, and Roman Catholic Churches. The Doctor's answer was clear and short: 'Tell your English priest that he was talking impudent drivel.'

'THE PALACE, PETERBOROUGH, *March* 23, 1908.

'I quite agree with you in lamenting that piece of narrow-minded parsonic jealousy, or whatever it was. Surely there is room for all of us in the Great Heart of the dear Lord and Master—and these "differences" seem to be unessential as we get on in the years. I believe more and more in "the Unity of the Spirit" and the "bond of peace."—Yours ever, 'E. C. PETRIBURG.'

'GLENGAIR, ROSNEATH, *June* 1908.

'MY DEAR NEPHEW,—This charming dwelling was offered to us by Princess Louise and the Duke of Argyll. It seems to me extraordinary that I came here on the 16th June, the very day when, in 1881, I left Liverpool for Quebec to act as Chaplain to the Governor-General, then Lord Lorne. More extraordinary still, the ship which carried me across the Atlantic is lying in the Gareloch right in front of this house.

'I thank God I am getting better, but slow, slow. On July 11th I shall begin my 77th year.'

To T. Jarron Gordon, Esq.:

'*Aug.* 1908.

'MY DEAR FRIEND AND ELDER,—I blessed God for what "your little Foreign Missionary plan" has already done for so many of our brave and devoted missionaries.

'Oh! if wealthy, professing Christians only tasted the pure, elevating, and intense delight which comes from gifts to God and to God's heroic servants, as all missionaries, men and women, are, there would be no need to beg and beg as we are compelled to do.

'Some day, if I am spared, I shall use your words, "The Church of Scotland, in the matter of giving for Christian work, has been no more than scratched upon the surface."'

He was asked by the West Edinburgh Unionist Association to give his motor or carriage for the election day:

'*Feb.* 5, 1909.

'DEAR MISS BROWN,—If I had a carriage or motor or both they would be at your disposal, but the only carriage I have is a pair of poor old legs, which have carried me to the tops of the highest mountains in Scotland and England and among the mountains of Horeb.

'They seem quite pleased with themselves now, when they take me to St. Cuthberts.

'I am quite sure that you will get an ample supply of motors for so good a cause.—I am, yours truly,

'JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

To LADY VICTORIA CAMPBELL: '1909.

'Be you grateful that our Lord has given you God's work to do almost all your life. Your heart, I see, is

still in beautiful Tiree with its new and much-needed pier.

'While I am writing to you I am waiting to hear the result of the meeting of the Presbytery this day, when my dear colleague, the Rev. Dr. Wallace Williamson, resigns his charge of St. Cuthberts Parish Church.

'I have no doubt as to what the result will be. It will be a very serious loss to me: for we were all through dear friends.

'I have just passed the fifty-fourth year of my ministry, and I feel stronger than I was last year.'

To Lady Mary: 'Oct. 1909.

'I am as glad as you are of the honour done to the gifted George Adam Smith, whose father I greatly respect as the author of the *Life of William Carey, Shoemaker and Missionary*. It is one of the finest and happiest books I have ever read. It is lying before me at this moment, a gift from Dr. George Smith.

'As for dear Sir Arthur Mitchell—"After he had served his own generation by the will of God, he fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers."

'To-morrow my colleague of five-and-twenty years will be elected minister of St. Giles, and I shall be left alone. God's will be done.'

On April the 3rd, 1910, he preached what proved to be his last sermon in St. Cuthberts. The service paper is written out in his clearest writing. The sermon was on Luke iv. 1-4. The concluding paraphrase was 'To Him that loved the souls of men.' It was well for him and for the people he loved so greatly that the vision of the coming parting with their 'Father in God' was hidden from their eyes. He stood for the last time in the pulpit which was his Pisgah, and spoke, as he always did, of the King in His Beauty in the Land he felt very near and around him.

On the 9th of the same month he became very ill, and it was soon clear that he was not recovering with his usual vitality. He suffered from loss of memory, the possession he had taxed so severely and valued most highly. He was conscious of its failure, and this was a severe trial to him. As soon as he was at all fit to move, he and his wife went to

stay with his niece in the quiet retirement of Millersneuk. Mr. and Mrs. Wordie gave him all possible care, and kept him in the seclusion which he sought. It was, however, evident that the shadows were closing in, or rather that they were around those who watched and loved him, for he seemed already to have pierced the veil, and to have entered into the beyond.

It was obvious to the tender guardian of all his interests that the time had come when he must lay down the responsibility of his great charge. Once convince him that the path of duty led in any one direction, steep or rough, however much his strength failed him for other things, he had power to walk in the light that was given him.

He wrote to the Session Clerk of St. Cuthberts a letter which the kirk-session heard read 'with affectionate concern,' and they expressed in their answer their grief that their minister felt called 'to sever the strong and sacred ties subsisting for so long between him and St. Cuthberts.'

'*Sept.* 5, 1910.

'DEAR MR. FORREST,—Although I am greatly better since coming to the country, I am not able for my work in St. Cuthberts, or I would have been at it this month.

'It is not only with great regret but with much pain that I write to ask you to tell my dear session that I must retire, my resignation to take effect from the 1st October next.

'My interest in and my love for dear St. Cuthberts, I need not tell you, will never cease while life remains.—Yours truly,

'JAMES MAC GREGOR.'

The resignation once made, from the time that he knew his work was ended, he became certain that the close of his life was at hand. Many and touching were the letters that he received; one from Professor Cowan gave him great satisfaction, and he said it recalled to his failing memory some of the scenes of the long past which he had forgotten:

'ABERDEEN, *Sept.* 30, 1910.

'MY DEAR DR. MAC GREGOR,—To many more besides your congregation the intimation of your resignation will bring sadness: for it means, I understand, not only that you

give up your pastorate (completely, too, as was characteristic of you), but that you cease to preach. This is a heavy loss for the Scottish Church in its widest sense, as well as for that "dear old church" which you have loved so devotedly and served so grandly.

'I go back in memory to old Newton days, when I was a boy of ten, and when you were the popular assistant whom the congregation liked to hear at *least* as well as Burns (and in those days that was something), and to the Paisley time when the warm appreciation of the "bodies" there was voiced more enthusiastically than decorously by the admiring cabman, who declared that you could preach "a' the other ministers to —— in ten minutes," and that he, the cabby, would rather miss a fare than the fare he got at the Hi'; and then through Monimail (your *Nyssa*—you recall Basil's words about his brother Gregory) to the two Trons, and thence to the great kirk where you have made the Scottish pulpit famous throughout the English-speaking world.

'So far as I know, your maintenance of pulpit fame for fifty-five years, and of pulpit pre-eminence for most of that time, is quite unique, and may well cause us to thank God for a preacher who has not only set before the Church in Scotland a splendid ideal, but "his line also is gone out through all the earth," through listeners at St. Cuthberts from all quarters of the world.

'Let us trust that you may yet be spared to be an emeritus watchman on the tower of Zion which you have potently helped to rebuild.'

'You may remember,' writes one after his death, 'an incident which occurred at a dinner-party. The host, where Dr. Mac Gregor was guest, indulged in some remarks of a jocular nature, which implied a scoffing at religion as something not worth consideration. The sting of his remark lay in the fact that, as our host, he implied our concurrence in his remarks, which were made apparently in all good nature and genial outspokenness. It was an awkward moment, and I remember feeling the perplexing distress of the situation. Dr. Mac Gregor, with a courage I shall never forget, reproved, and that effectually, the spirit in which the remarks were made, and his words produced an apologetic silence. In that there might have been nothing out of the way, but

few men could have done it as he did. He made no scene, did not fortify himself with a fit of indignation, but solely by the firmness and moral force of the rebuke shamed the speaker into a sense of his mistake. There was no breach of friendship, or interruption of courtesy, only perhaps a minute's silence, and thereafter the evening passed pleasantly enough. I am sure no one rose from the table without having a deep sense of Dr. Mac Gregor's moral courage in a very trying and delicate occasion.'

The last letter to his successor in the senior charge of St. Cuthberts was written in a hand as firm and clear as in his earliest days:

'*Nov.* 5, 1910.

'My dear Mr. Duncan,—Thanks to you for writing to me so kindly. One of my richest blessings is that you are my successor. I shall never forget to pray for you in the solemn work which has fallen to your lot.—I am, yours truly,

'James Mac Gregor.'

He returned to his home in September, and one who had for thirty years entered his study, as one of his own household, came in to see him. Some months had elapsed since their last meeting. His 'dear Bairn in the Faith' had passed away, and his first thought in other days would have been of this loss, which he had shared with her people.

He stood by the table, shrunk and wasted to a shadow. Everything was changed, save the indomitable spirit which flickered and leapt in his eyes, as he turned with his look of recognition. 'You have heard,' he asked, 'that I have resigned my charge? I am no longer minister of St. Cuthberts. I hope as my work is done that I shall be away soon.'

He had the old manner, when looking forward eagerly to one of his far journeys, only yet more impatient. He seemed to feel the burden of life intolerable, and rest only to be sought for in the sunset lands behind the hills of time. Again came the words, 'I want to go, I have nothing more to do.'

The hands which had ministered to and blessed the waiting people were held close as he was bidden 'to remember that, with recovered health, he might again be able to preach, and that as long as he was here, he would have work to do. There was one in his home, and many others who needed his presence,' but there was no healing the sense that his work was ended, no comfort save in the thought that he might soon be released. 'Here in the body pent,' he had not long to wait. The one clear call he had longed to hear came at last:

> 'And his lifeless body lay
> A worn-out fetter, that the soul
> Had broken and thrown away.'

On November 25, 1910, Dr. Mac Gregor died, and with the great preacher there passed on the same day the learned scholar and philosopher, Professor Flint.

The one was a recluse, who in his study wrought out the results of the learning of the age. The other was a man who sought God in Nature, and His works in the heart of humanity. There were no two more representative men of the thought and life in the Church of Scotland for the years that followed the Disruption of the Church. To recall their history in the Victorian age is to pass in review the regenerating forces which were at work, and which vitalised the Church of Christ through one of the most anxious periods in the history of Scottish Church and State.

As the multitude of Dr. Mac Gregor's friends and fellow-citizens stood beneath the shadow of the Iona Cross that he had raised over the grave which contained those of his name and blood, and where he knew he would rest himself, it was hardly possible to believe that he had passed beyond the region of sense and time.

He left behind as a possession the memory of his gifted life, spent in strenuous service, of the genius that belongs to his race, and above all the loyal, devoted heart that never failed his country or his friends.

There could be no mourning for this strong soldier of the Cross, whose service of love and faith had been claimed for

a higher sphere. To know even as he was known, to see the Lord and Master of his life, had been the inspiration of his earthly days. From that open grave, and through the silence of the wintry day there came, as the sound of many waters, the words which were so often on his lips: 'Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am He that liveth and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of Hades and of death.'

. . . . . .

The Rev. Dr. Fleming, of St. Columba's (Church of Scotland), Pont Street, London, writes:

'For nearly a quarter of a century I was honoured by his intimate friendship, and through all that time he overshadowed me with an unstinted affection.

'To wander in the garden of memory by the aid of this biography is surely to feel again the magic of his quick, intense, and captivating presence, and to step back into an air which at once invigorates and soothes. I have met many men and women in my day of arresting personality, and possessed of the quick sympathy that spells inevitable conquest; but never any who, to this degree, could engulf you, as it were, in themselves for an instant—then throw you back into life, no longer a worn machine, but a renewed and living soul.

'I never knew a mind so absolutely simple, unaffected, and transparent, and yet (a paradox) so complex, versatile, illusive. And for this reason—his being was compact of such a multitude of emotions as covered the whole gamut of feeling; yet, intellectually, he was a man of simple, rectilinear, unquavering and unwavering faith, such faith as a child might have, which ran through his whole life from beginning to end, and was the thread on which it all was hung; or (to change the metaphor) the touchstone to which he brought every decision, every thought, word, and action of that infinitely varied, crowded, and tumultuous career.

'And in these two characteristics—his all-comprehensive and quickly sensitive sympathy, and his absolutely unclouded and uncomplicated faith—one finds the clue to his power, almost unrivalled among preachers of his day, of swaying the hearts and minds of multitudes. For about fifty years there was no church or hall in Scotland so vast but that

it would be crowded to its utmost capacity—be it week-day or Sunday—if it were announced that Dr. Mac Gregor was to preach. And to watch him—as I have done again and again—as he played upon the heart-strings of these vast multitudes, and bent their resolutions to his will, moving them now (if the subject and the day were secular) to uncontrollable and overwhelming mirth, now to scorching tears, and again to a passion for action in some righteous cause which he had advocated, or against some crying iniquity which he had furiously denounced; to watch him do this, as he did with unerring effectiveness, week after week, month after month, year after year, was to be conscious of the presence of one of those tornado-like personalities that come from time to time to sweep whole multitudes before them into the channels of emotion, of conviction, and of action.

'And yet we remember him in quite another guise. The thunderous voice is subdued to the note of a dove. The eye that flashed in furious lightnings over the crowds, or sparkled with contagious, irresistible merriment—it was a wonderful eye—had become soft and caressing as a mother's. I have come into its presence once and again, with my disquietudes and sorrows; and, lo, they were stilled and soothed in an instant under its yearning—its delicate caress. Yet, with all its sympathy and gentleness, his look had in its midst just one single, penetrating ray—thin, straight, piercing to the marrow; and if there were any insincerity in you, any telling to him only half the truth, any posing in his presence, that stiletto of light found you out unerringly, and you could not look him in the face again till you had made your peace with honesty, and come back to be forgiven.

'Great as he was as an orator and master of men, it is in this other and intimate phase that I believe he will live in the secret annals of God's archangel. In his time he was familiar with many of the great ones of the earth; nor was there one of them but would tell that it was in this intimacy of immediate and healing sympathy that he became most to each of them. But, besides these, and more than these—surely I, who shared for a space his labours, should know—there were countless hundreds of the poor, the obscure, the overlooked, the down-trodden; countless hundreds of—I do not even say the rank and file, but the camp-followers and the derelicts of life—who owed

all that came to them of hope and healing, and a fresh grip on life, to that strangely moving look and that sympathy which spared neither pains on their behalf, nor prayer.

'"Nor prayer": for this was the white flame at the very centre of his life. To the throne of Grace, with unfailing mindfulness and with childlike simplicity, he would bring, day by day, his friends, his people, those in special sorrow, sickness, or sin; so filling his petitions with engrossed and concentrated intercession for them in their needs that he became wholly forgetful of his own. Once, when I had been ill, he said to me, "I have prayed for you night and morning for five months." And I knew that it was true. In his long life it was true of thousands of others. And he believed, with such intensity and simplicity of conviction as no man can ever have surpassed, that every word of intercession that he uttered went straight to a heavenly Father's ear, and found an answering chord in a heavenly Father's heart.

'A man of little stature and giant heart, of gallant front and fearless eye, and soul that never quailed before the face of man, or onslaught of calamity, he stood forth, to us who knew him, pure Scot, essential son of genius, the beloved of thousands. Letters shall have done no more grateful service in our time to our northern land if in these pages they present to the world a true and living portrait of one of the most winning and most brilliant of her sons.'

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